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MEMOIR

OF THE

LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF

MR. WILLIAM BRAMWELL,

LATELY AN

ITINERANT METHODIST PREACHER;

WITH EXTRACTS FROM HIS

INTERESTING AND EXTENSIVE CORRESPONDENCE.

BY JAMES SIGSTON,

QUEEN SQUARE ACADEMY, LEEDS.

VOL. I.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY O. SCOTT,

FOR THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONNECTION OF AMERICA.

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1846.

MEMOIR

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MR. WILLIAM ELLIOTT.

BY JAMES SMITH.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY CARLTON,

FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

PREFACE.

I was intimately acquainted with the late holy and highly respected William Bramwell. In the course of the following narrative, it will appear that I had long been honored with his friendship and correspondence, and that his death occurred only a few minutes after he had left my house. From these and other circumstances, I was induced, at the earnest solicitations of his friends, to undertake the preparation of this Memoir of his Life and Ministry. It is a source of lamentation to me, that I have not been able to present an account of my much esteemed friend, more worthy of his excellences and of the notice of the religious public.

Many causes have conspired to hinder the completion of a good memoir. When Mr. Bramwell was in the Hull circuit, he destroyed his valuable diary, the contents of which would unquestionably have furnished a rich entertainment to every Christian. With the motives which induced him to commit those excellent manuscripts to the flames, I am not perfectly acquainted. I have been informed by a friend, who conversed with him on the subject, that he said many of the particulars were of so extraordinary a nature, that he thought that they would almost be considered as enthusiastic and visionary; but I have reason to believe, that he saw the impropriety of this act, several years before his death. Some of Mr. Bramwell's friends had promised to contribute a few papers in illustration of this account of his life; but in several instances these promises had been unfulfilled, either through forgetfulness, negligence, or the paramount demands of other engagements. A great disparity of style will be perceptible in different parts of the memoir; as it will be seen that the same excellences are treated by different writers, chiefly in their own words. But by candid readers this diversity will not be regarded as any disparagement to the work; they will rather be pleased to find, in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word established respecting the virtues of Mr. Bramwell. All the accounts, however varied in style, unite in correctly representing his love to God, "his yearning pity for mankind," and his intense desire for

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their salvation. These powerful motives were in constant exercise on his mind, and incited him to the performance of labors innumerable. It is probable that there have been but few Christian ministers since the days of the apostles, who have made greater exertions to bring to the fold of Christ the fallen sons of men, and whose labors have been more signally owned by the great Head of the Church.

But though the destruction of his journal, the unfulfilled promises of several friends, and the difference of style, have rendered this memoir an irregular kind of composition; yet I trust that every humble follower of our Lord Jesus Christ will be edified and instructed by the living traits of holiness which it exhibits. Some of the anecdotes may, in the view of cool and calculating characters, seem to savor too much of enthusiasm. But this cannot be charged on Mr. Bramwell as a fault: for he has left behind him no written account of any of these transactions, and was seldom known to speak of them, even in the presence of those who had the happiness of enjoying his most intimate friendship. Yet it is not attempted to be denied, that his was the noble enthusiasm of exerting all his powers to give effect to the gracious purposes of God among the perishing sons of Adam. Without a goodly portion of this noble feeling, no man ever yet excelled in any profession: why then should it be the subject of blame, only in the profession of religion? Can any man be too zealous in the promotion of the vital interests of godliness? This is impossible

> On such a theme 't is impious to be calm:
> Passion is reason; transport, temper here.
>
> YOUNG.

The publication of this work has been retarded on various accounts, and the Christian world have consequently felt greatly disappointed. My own avocations are so numerous that I could not have undertaken to prepare this memoir for the press without availing myself of the assistance of some literary friend; and I here return my sincere thanks to Mr. Nichols, whose talents are well known to the world, for his kind assistance and advice in various parts of the work. It was a subject of regret to me, that when I contemplated the early completion of the memoir by the continuance of his aid, I was suddenly deprived of it, at the close of last December, by his removal to London.

And now, if this humble attempt to do justice to the character and labors of this eminently faithful minister of the Gospel, shall excite an earnest

wish in his junior brethren to imitate his conduct, or an increased desire in the people for the attainment of that holiness of heart and life which he inculcated and exemplified;—in short, if this volume be made a blessing to any who peruse it, my object in the publication will be gained, and to God alone shall all the glory be ascribed.

JAMES SIGSTON.

Queen Square Academy, Leeds, April 21, 1820.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE success which has attended the sale of the first edition of this memoir, and the very favorable reception given to it by the religious public, are circumstances which have afforded me real pleasure, and not the less on account of the emolument which will thus accrue to Mrs. Bramwell. In the absence of all pretensions to literary fame from the execution of the work, my labor having been little more than that of compilation, arrangement, and correction, it is yet most gratifying to find that the perusal of it, has been attended with much spiritual benefit, both to saints and sinners. This is the result for which I was most anxious, and I thank God that it has been granted to me.

The supercilious manner in which certain portions of the memoir have been viewed by a few profane persons has been no serious abatement to this grateful feeling. For, as the preceding preface will show, I had calculated that so long as "*the carnal mind is enmity against God*," it cannot receive "*the things of the Spirit*," however clearly revealed, or accurately expressed. To such persons these subjects "*are foolishness,; they cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" J. S.

Leeds, October 4, 1820.

MEMOIR

OF

MR. WILLIAM BRAMWELL.

CHAPTER I.

Mr. Bramwell's birth, parentage, and education—His father's excellent instruction—Anecdote—The moral qualities of his youth—Early indisposition—His antipathy to settling in Liverpool—He is bound apprentice to a currier.

Mr. William Bramwell, the subject of this memoir, was born in February, in the year 1759, at Elswick, a village nearly ten miles from Preston, in the parish of St. Michael, Lancashire. His parents, George and Elizabeth Bramwell, had a family of eleven children, of whom William was the tenth. Mrs. Hargreave, of Westgate Hill, near Birstal, and Mrs. Jones, of Liverpool, are now the only surviving members of this once large and flourishing family. The others have accomplished their warfare, and are gathered to their fathers. When we contemplate the disappearance of whole families, with many of whom the best affections of our hearts have long been associated, may we not join in the exclamation of the man of God,—"*Your fathers,—where are they? And the prophets,—do they live forever?*"

Mr. Bramwell's parents were warmly attached to the Established Church; and according to the light which they possessed, educated their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But their religious views were exceedingly circumscribed. Nor were they singular in this respect; for spiritual darkness at that period nearly enveloped this Christian land. The Gospel light introduced at the time of the Reformation had dwindled away into obscurity, and "*blind leaders of the blind*" were too frequently the only guides of the people. Mr. Bramwell's native village, and several other towns in Lancashire, were among the most benighted parts of England. The Roman Catholics then composed, and still form, a considerable part of the population of that county. The members of other denominations therefore assumed not a little consequence from being styled Protestants. Without possessing greater spiritual light than their popish neighbors, they considered this name as the test of religion, and the passport to sanctity.

A chapel of ease, called *Cop Chapel*, was the place of worship frequented by Mr. Bramwell's parents. Though it was situated about a

mile from their house, yet, whatever might be the state of the weather, they were scrupulously exact in attending the service of the Church, with all their family, every Sabbath. It was their earnest wish that their children should be observant of every moral obligation, and attentive to all the duties of life. Beyond this, their ideas of pure religion had never extended. In love with the form of godliness, they were destitute of its power. They did not perceive the necessity of constant Divine influence and of spiritual regeneration. A rigid adherence to the ceremonies of the Church was the highest standard of their piety; and none of their children could be guilty of a more grievous offence against them than that of absenting themselves from the Church service, or resorting to the meeting house of some other denomination, Mr. Bramwell's father was particularly reserved toward his children. On this account they were prevented from making him their confidant, and could approach him with no other feeling than that of awe or dread.

It was, however, a great benefit to Mr. Bramwell, that he was blessed with parents, whose knowledge and practice so nearly coincided. We are at this day in the habit of looking back with pity and compassion on the ignorance of those elder times, and of expressing our thankfulness for the superior illumination of these our glorious days. And in this we act aright, if the retrospect incline us to improve our privileges. But with our uncommon advantages, would there be any misapplication of Scripture, if this passage were repeated to us,—"Wo unto thee, Chorazin! Wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackloth and ashes?"

From his parents, whose religious attainments, it is seen, were very limited, Mr. Bramwell imbibed the most *profound veneration for the Lord's day.* And indeed what man ever attained to any eminence in piety, who was not very scrupulous in his regard to the Sabbath? As an instance of his extreme tenderness of conscience in this respect, it may be stated that, during his apprenticeship, he was much attached to botanical pursuits, and kept a number of curious plants and shrubs in the window of his lodging room. Although some of them, from their delicacy, required particular care and attention, yet if he had neglected to water them on the Saturday evening, and found them drooping in consequence on the Sunday, he would not by watering them commit an act which he considered a breach of the observance of that sacred day, but postponed it until the following morning.

Proper attention to the Sabbath must always lead in its train a corresponding *love for the word of God*, and regular habits of perusing it. In Mr. G. Bramwell's family, this was a part of the required duties of that holy day. All the children had their portion of reading assigned them, and were taught to regard the sacred volume as a revelation of mercy from heaven.

How salutary has an early knowledge of the Scriptures often proved! The holy principles which they inculcate frequently remain latent in the youthful breast until they are elicited by providential circumstances. Then it is that their peculiar importance and gracious effects are very perceptible. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the word of God has been silently "preparing the way of the Lord;" and when once the heart has been inflamed by a spark of grace, the subjects of this divine change have themselves been amazed at the readiness with which they could bring out of the treasure house of their memory, things new and old.

We may see the effect which this early acquaintance with Scripture truth produced in the mind of the Rev. John Newton, the friend of the poet Cowper. The portions of God's word which he had read when but four years of age, were brought to his recollection above twenty years afterward, at the time of his short captivity on the coast of Africa. He wondered at the great harvest which had been almost unconsciously husbanded; and when he was not possessed of a Bible to which he could have recourse, and which, with the perverse feelings which he then evinced, he would have been unwilling to peruse,—his unassisted memory furnished him with supplies in abundance. At forty years of age, by a wonderful train of circumstances, he became a minister in the Established Church, and during a space of nearly half a century edified the age in which he lived, and left materials in his writings for instructing future generations. To a similar early initiation in Scriptural knowledge, we may attribute the same effects in Mr. William Bramwell. It was owing to this cause that he became a good textuary, and with the utmost ease acquired the habit of referring to the Scriptures for the proof and illustration of the doctrines which he preached.

By his parents Mr. Bramwell was also instructed in *a strict regard to truth*. And this was not inculcated by precept or exhortation alone, but happily recommended by practice. His father, like the great Epaminondas, never told a lie, even in jest. Of whatever importance the affair might be in which George Bramwell's name was mentioned, if it were known that he had sanctioned any thing by his affirmation, his neighbors considered his word to be decisive, and required no farther proof of the authenticity of the matter. For the same humble imitation of the God of truth, his son William was equally distinguished. Even in his unconverted state, this was a virtue which he constantly practised, and from the observation of which he never receded. On no occasion could he be enticed or intimidated to betray its interests or disobey its dictates; and, in certain instances, in which a person of less firmness would have wavered, fearless of consequences, he asserted the truth with the boldness of a lion. Unimpeachable veracity is so rare among mankind, that the wicked themselves display a kind of supernatural re-

spect for the manly character in which it is found. It is indeed a legible trace of the Deity, which commands universal admiration, and on which the most sublime virtues have a firm foundation. All these instructions forwarded the operations of Divine grace in his mind. At the early age of seven years, while he was yet under the roof of his father, he was favored with the awakening visits of God's Holy Spirit; he had powerful convictions of sin, and deeply felt the necessity of a change in his heart and affections. These religious feelings never left him, till he experienced the great blessing of a sound conversion.

In his childhood Mr. Bramwell was much afflicted with the ague and other disorders. He had the small pox when he was six years of age; and such was the excruciating bodily anguish which he felt when this disease had reached its crisis, that, in a paroxysm of pain, he ran out of the house, threw himself into a pond, and was completely immersed in the water. But He who "guards the sacred heirs of heaven," had his own gracious purposes to answer by him, and suffered no farther evil consequences to ensue from this involuntary act, than some large boils or blisters which arose on his skin, by which for some time nature endeavored to cast off her surfeit. These did not cause great irritation or pain, but were very troublesome; and while they remained he was ordered to be confined to his room. Much of his time was then spent in singing psalms in bed. At lenght all the bad effects of his indisposition left him; and he gradually recovered his former health and vigor. Singing was, indeed, always a delightful exercise to Mr. Bramwell. Nature had given him a fine, mellow voice, well adapted to sacred music; until his subsequent excessive labor and exertions in the ministerial office had robbed it of its sweetness. From his infancy he had been well instructed in Church psalmody his vocal powers having early rendered him a favorite among the singers at Cop Chapel. When a child he had a place assigned him in the singers' pew, where a stool was set to elevate him, that his voice might be heard by the whole congregation. He received such an education as the means of instruction in the village of Elswick could afford. Knowledge had not in those days given itself that elastic bound which it has since done. The qualifications which were then considered necessary for young persons in the middle ranks of society were not numerous, and few persons could enjoy even the whole of these advantages. In the course of this narrative, it will be perceived how sedulously he applied himself to remedy the defects which he had experienced in his education, and what great success crowned his endeavors.

The early part of his youth was spent at home. His father who was a farmer, and possessed of a small landed property, employed him for some time in agricultural affairs; but when he had nearly attained the age of sixteen years, he was sent to Liverpool to reside with his eldest brother, John, who was a merchant of great respectability in that town. It was

intended that William should have been brought up to that profession; but after a short time his disinclination to that calling was so manifest, that his parents desired him to return home; and he was not backward in adopting their advice. His chief ground of dissatisfaction was, that the situation militated against his religious pursuits. His reason informed him, that the seductive dissipation of a gay seaport, and the opportunities which he would there have of indulging himself in its pleasures, were circumstances ill suited to promote the higher objects that he had in view. As he was at this period very ignorant of vital godliness, he did not perceive how great a disparagement it was to the grace of God, to dstrust its sufficiency in preserving him faithful and incorrupt in an honest calling, however numerous and great his temptation might prove.

Yet, to the close of his life, he was accustomed to speak of his residence in Liverpool with horror and disgust; and always thanked God that he had been providentially called to escape from the snares and pollutions with which it abounded. He frequently declared it to be his settled belief, that had he remained much longer in Liverpool, he would have been ruined for ever. It is remarkable that only a few weeks before he died when he was recalling this circumstance to memory in company with Mrs. Bramwell, he expressed his gratitude to God for delivering him from these temptations.

Soon after he had left Liverpool, he engaged himself, with the approbation of his parents, as an apprentice to Mr. Brandreth, a currier in Preston. He had not been long in this new occupation, before he had a severe attack of disease in his chest and stomach. The complaint with which he was afflicted assumed for some time the appearance of a deep consumption: but by the blessing of God on the means which were used to remove this indispostion, he gradually recovered.

His situation was now very comfortable. Mr. Brandreth, though not himself a religious man, placed the greatest confidence in his apprentice, and highly valued him for his unimpeachable honesty and integrity, — qualities of far greater importance in trade than the narrowminded slaves of sin are willing to allow. An instance of the sterling excellence of these virtues occurred soon after he went into his master's employ. The person who acted as salesman and retailed goods to the customers, was in the habit of giving a more glowing description of his article than plain truth would warrant. When those persons hesitated to receive his testimony, he generally appeled for a corroboration to any of the apprentices that were present. The first time William Bramwell was applied to in this manner he instantly replied, "No, sir. The quality of that leather is not so good as you have represented it!" As several persons in the trade were present when he gave this answer, they conceived the highest opinion of his veracity and uprightness. This anecdote was soon circulated; in consequence of which, his virtue

was honored, and his character became established with all those by whom he was known. His master might have been displeased by this marked preference shown to one who was yet quite a stripling: but he soon experienced the advantage of this noble of transacting business, by the great increase of customers that it brought: "For the Lord blessed his master's house for William's sake, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house." He had also discovered several malpractices among his fellow apprentices, and, without hesitation or fear of the evil which the delinquents might practise against him, acquainted his master with the knavery. This procured Mr. Brandreth's respect and good will, and he was fully convinced, that such an apprentice was invaluable; and that every act of his would be performed with a particular view to his master's interest.

Although Mr. Bramwell was thus esteemed by his master, it was rather as a faithful and valuable servant, in whom he could repose entire confidence, than as a person cultivating with all his heart the fear of God. Mr. Brandreth, so far from being religious, was entirely ignorant of the nature and power of genuine Christianity. The punctilious fear of offending the Supreme Being, the zealous earnestness in prayer, and preparation for eternity, which he beheld in Mr Bramwell, he ascribed to the enthusiasm of an overheated mind. It was this ignorance which induced him to say, "William Bramwell is mad in these things, yet, as a servant, he is inestimable." To this also must be imputed the degree of persecution which Mr. B. suffered for religion. The ardor and zeal of his mind in perusing the oracles of Divine truth, could not escape the observation of any one who knew him. He prosecuted this study to a very late hour in the night, when he had retired to his chamber. To render these pursuits impossible, he was allowed no candles in the evening. When he was deprived of this resource he still persevered in the attainment of Divine knowledge, and when the family was retired to rest, laying himself down on the hearth as near the fireplace as possible, by the remnant of the fire he read as long as the cinders afforded any light. Mr. Bramwell has been often heard to relate this circumstance as one of the greatest privations he ever endured, and to urge others to make a right use of those privileges which were in this instance denied to him.

Yet opposition in all its forms was rendered very helpful to his improvement; as it caused him to be more solicitous in devoting every moment of leisure during the day to the perusal of the sacred records, and other books of instruction. He seized with avidity every opportunity of increasing his knowledge of Divine things; and this earnestness soon turned to good account.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Bramwell's convictions — His alarming distress of mind — His acts of austerity and mortification — The anguish of his spirit injures his health — He recives the sacrament for the first time—In that ordinance he obtains a sense of God's pardoning love — His great zeal for the honor of God — He associates with the Church singers, and loses much of the consolation which he had felt — He becomes acquainted with a man of piety — After many conflicts, he goes to hear the Methodists, and joins the society.

The salutary effects of the instruction and example of Mr. Bramwell's parents have been already noticed. During his apprenticeship his previous convictions were increased in an extraordinary manner. One Sunday evening, while on his return from Elswick, where he had been to visit his parents, their kindness to him was suddenly and forcibly brought to his recollection. At the same time he began to reflect with the greatest shame and confusion his numerous acts of disobedience and ingratitude to them. Though he had been a most dutiful child, yet he was so overpowered at the view of the offences which his memory recalled, that he fell down on his knees in the lane, and there cried aloud to God to have mercy upon him, and to pardon his transgressions. As soon as he arrived at his master's house, in Preston, he retired to his room, and rolled himself on the floor in an agony, like a person distracted. These troubles of mind continued for some time, both night and day, without intermission. He was deeply humbled at the sight of his conduct, and could not be satisfied till he took the earliest opportunity of returning to Elswick, to confess his offences in the presence of his father, and crave his forgiveness. His father, who considered him one of the most dutiful of sons, was surprised at the power of these convictions, which he could not comprehend. "Dear!" said he, "what hast thou done to lay these heavy charges against thyself? Thou hast not murdered any body." At the same time he told William that so far from being undutiful and ungrateful, he had done nothing which required a parent's forgiveness. With this consoling assurance he returned to Preston greatly relieved in spirit, and formed a strong resolution to change the coruse of his life. His repentance toward God continued deep and sincere: and he sought every occasion of manifesting is by frequent acts of fasting, mortification and prayer. He also attended the service of the parish church, with the most scrupulous regularity; and showed his genuine zeal for the honor of God, and his hatred to sin, by reproving the latter at all seasons, and in every company.

But while he was the subject of these Divine operations, he stood alone, and had no pious friend to whom he could disclose his feelings or with whom he could take sweet counsel respecting his soul. Of all

the professors of Christianity in the neighborhood, the papists were the strictest; and, to a youthful mind, they appeared to evince some due regard to the external forms of religion. Though he had been sufficiently well instructed to dislike the principles and general practices of that Church, yet the austerities, penances, and privations, to which its members occasionally subjected themselves, to him seemed highly reasonable; and at that period he had no doubt of such sacrifices being acceptable to God. Laboring under the greatest concern for the salvation of his soul, he adopted several modes of mortifying the flesh, of the most severe description, different in some external respects from those of the Roman Catholics, but the same in principle. To remind him of his sins, on account of which he thought he was not sufficiently humbled, he frequently cut off the skin and flesh from the ends of his fingers, and would not for some time suffer the self-inflicted wounds to heal. About midnight he often arose and stole down into the kitchen, while the members of his master's family were asleep; then sprinkling a corner of the floor with some of the roughest sand he could find and uncovering his knees, he knelt down, and in that painful posture spent many hours of the night in fervent supplications for the pardon of his sins. When the apprentices were allowed a day of relaxation, instead of employing it as they did, in carnal pleasures and worldly amusements, he retired to an obscure part of a wood near Preston, and having climbed up a favourite tree, he usually remained there till evening, confessing his sins aloud in the presence of his heavenly Father, and earnestly imploring forgiveness.

While in this disconsolate state of mind, he sometimes wandered from Preston, after the labours of the day, and, walking as far as his fathers house in Elswick, a distance of ten miles, he has slowly returned the same night, without partaking of the least refreshment, or informing any of his fatherer's family that an individual so wretched as himself was near their abode. After this solitary walk of twenty miles, he was ready to commence his labor, the next morning, with the earliest of his master's workmen.

His constitution was naturally robust. But had his flesh been brass and his sinews iron, the austerities in which he voluntarily persisted for many months would have ruined his health. Strong as he was, he at last found his frame unequal to the inward conflict which was itself sufficiently severe without the infliction of penitential bodily torture. His friends perceived that his countenance became pale, and that his strength was quickly declining. Being concerned for his welfare, they applied for advice to two physicians, who, unable satisfactorily to account for the emaciated state of his body, called the undefined and hidden cause of his unhappiness, "a nervous complaint."

But God, who is rich in mercy, shortly afterward effected for him a

great deliverance. He had prepared himself with much prayer and self examination for worthily partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and while in the act of receiving the sacred elements from the hand of the Rev. Mr. Wilson, a pious clergyman at Preston, under whose ministry he had greatly profited, he obtained a clear sense of pardon. All his bodily ailments soon forsook him, and his "spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour." Darkness and gloom, guilt and condemnation, where at once removed in a manner incomprehensible to him, and utterly beyond all that he had ever been taught to expect or desire. The height of his joy was equalled only by the previous depth of his sorrow. He testified in every way his unfeigned gratitude to Him who had made him glad with the light of his countenance. Influenced by this priciple, he tried even to *purchase* the obedience of others to the commands of his loving Saviour. To this purpose he applied all the money allowed him by his parents. If any young people swore in his presence, he affectionately reproved them, and, if if they still persisted, he endeavored to buy them off from such profane practices, by giving them a sum of money. By this method he induced many to promise that they would no longer be guilty of their customary language of oaths and imprecations. In the same spirit he often followed depraved individuals into public houses, and dissuaded them from a continuance in their ungodly course of life. He suffered neither rich nor poor, young nor old, to escape reproof, when he perceived any thing in their spirit or conduct that was culpable. In behalf of his Divine Master, who had mercifully "called him out of darkness into marvellous light," he had always a word in season.

Yet at this critical period, his Christianity was of a solitary kind. He walked alone in the ways of God. None of his friends appeared to be in earnest for the same blessings as those which he enjoyed. To secure therefore his continuance in the paths of righteousness, and to strengthen his newly formed gracious habits and holy resolutions, he knew of no method equal to that of associating himself with the church singers. He thought that no body of men upon earth approached in their spirit and employment so nearly to the occupation of "the spirits of just men made perfect," as these cheerful choristers. To join with them in celebrating the high praises of God, appeared to him, artless as he then was, an object fraught with good, and most gratifying to his pious feelings. He entered heartily into this plan, and was constant in his attendance in the singer's pew. But there were other places more frequented by these rustic musicians than the church. To perfect themselves in their various parts, they considered it needful for the whole fraternity regularly to assemble at a rendezvous; and that most commonly was a large room in an alehouse. By gradually imbibing the spirits and habits of his new associates, Mr. Bramwell almost imperceptibly

lost the comfort and happiness which he had so recently experienced. These persons where unfit companions for one, like him, exercised unto godliness; levity and mirth being their particular delight when they were not immediately engaged in the service of the church. His religious feelings became dull and languid; and in this uncomfortable frame of mind he passed nearly three months.

About this period one of his friends proposed to lend him the works of the Rev. John Wesley. He accepted the offer; but he soon afterward returned them unread,—declaring that he durst on no account peruse them, as he was fearful of their corrupting effects, and o the tendency which they would have to destroy his religion.

Mr. Roger Crane, who was then a member of the Methodist society in Preston, had heard that Mr. Bramwell was so much in earnest for the salvation of his soul as to be almost "beside himself." In consequence of this he took some pains to be introduced to him. He soon became acquainted with him, and gained his confidence; and this, after an interchange of many visits, was ripened into a strong and mutual attachment. Such an intimacy was peculiarly pleasing to Mr. Bramwell, and he perfectly acquiesced in all the religious views and statements of his more experienced companion. Christian experience and religious enjoyment were not then novel subjects. He had felt them, and knew their meaning and importance. At length Mr. Crane concluded that it was his duty to invite his friend to hear a Methodist preacher, and assured him that he would find the truths which he loved, explained in a clearer and more scriptural manner, and with greater comfort to his own mind, than by his favorite clergyman. But though strongly and often solicited, he always declined the invitation; and as a full explaination of his resolution and the motives which influenced him, he told Mr. C. that his father had extracted a promise from him, not to attend the preaching of the Methodists, and had warned all his family against any connection with such a despicable community. He considered them an infatuated and deceiving body of people, like wolves in sheep's clothing.

This continued refusal caused a great shyness between the two young men. Their interviews became less frequent; friendship had no longer its former attraction, and in the end their intimacy entirely ceased. They kept apart from each other nearly six moths, and, in the interim Mr. B. became more lax in his principles, and less scrupulous in his conduct. The alluring habits and maxims of the world, which he had hitherto firmly and successfully resisted, seemed almost insensibly to steal upon him. He drooped in spirit, and lost all sensible comfort. He was in this unhappy frame when a conversation that took place between him and Robert Looker, one of his master's workmen, induced him to attend for the first time the preaching of the Methodists. Robert relates the circumstance in the following simple manner:—

"I have now been forty years acquainted with Mr. Bramwell. He and I wrought together in the same shop nearly six years. I never knew his equal for strict morality. His parents were rigidly attached to the Established Church. When he received his first religious impressions he became very zealous. I heard him reprove sin in all places, and the commission of it vexed his righteous soul from day to day. At that time he had neither heard a Methodist preacher nor attended any of their meetings. He was prejudiced against them, but yet not so much as his parents were. Their antipathy was deep and inveterate.

"A very wicked old woman lived near my master's shop. She was a notorious swearer and blasphemer. Mr. Bramwell's principles would not allow her to utter oaths and curses in his hearing without reproving her. One day when she had been exercising herself in her usual way, he wrote a note and sent it to her. It contained some appropriate passages of Scripture, and in the conclusion it was intimated, that, as all profane persons had their portion in the everlasting fire of hell, she was evidently one of them, and must expect the same dreadful doom unless she repented of her sins and abandoned her evil practices. The old woman, knowing that Mr. Bramwell and I were intimate, came like a fury to our house, and with a dreadful oath called Mr. B. who was absent, *a Methodist devil!* My wife who was then a strict Roman Catholic,* asked the reason of her wrath. She replied, 'He has sent me a note, in which he says that I am a wicked woman, and must burn in hell forever.' More chagrined at hearing him stigmatize for being a *Methodist*, than if he had been censured for open impiety, my wife said, 'Jane you shall not call him a Methodist for I am sure he is not one of that sort!' when Mr. Bramwell called at our house in the evening, my wife began to relate the charge she had heard against him by saying, 'William! Jane M. has been cursing you and calling you a Methodist; and I told her that no one should give you that scandalous name in my hearing, for I hate it more than any other.

"On hearing this, Mr. Bramwell turned to me and said, Robert, did you ever hear the people called Methodists? I told him I had heard them sometimes in the fields near London, but knew very little about them.—I understand they have begun to preach in Preston; will you go to hear them?' I replied, 'I am quite willing.' He then said, My Bible tells me, 'They that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,' and these people are much vilified and persecuted.' He told me he would make some inquiry about the time of preaching; and on the appointed day we repaired together to the small house where these outcasts assem-

* Mr. Bramwell was, some years afterward, made an honored instrument in the conversion of Mrs. Looker and her husband. Both of them have long enjoyed the pleasures of religion, and "*their conversation has been as becometh the Gospel of Christ.*

bled. We found more than a dozen persons present, and the sermon was on the subject of the bond woman and the free woman. I liked the drift of the discourse pretty well: yet at that time it did not take hold of my heart. But Mr. Bramwell was like Lydia whose heart the Lord had opened to received the word. When we went again we heard old Mr. Hopper, and having begun to meet in class, we were soon afterward admitted into society. Mr. Longley gave us our first tickets."

About this time, too, his real friend, Mr. Crane, was told by a person whom he was intimate, that Mr. Bramwell was afraid he had offended Mr. C. by not going with him to hear the Methodists, although he had been repeatedly invited. He had told the same person, that if Mr. Crane again desired him, he certainly would not refuse. Mr. Crane, therefore, once more designedly met him, and commenced a renewal of their former friendship, by requesting the pleasure of his company to hear a Methodist preacher. He cheerfully assented to the proposal of his friend, and in the evening they went and heard Mr. Andrew Inglis. On their return, Mr. Crane asked him how he liked the sermon. "O!" said he, his eyes beaming with joy, "this is the kind of preaching which I have long wanted to hear. These are the people with whom I am resolved to live and die!"

CHAPTER III.

The grief of Mr. Bramwell's parents when they heard that he had become a Methodist — His interview with the Rev. John Wesley — Perplexity of mind respecting his call to the ministry — He becomes the leader of a class and a local preacher — Fruits of his labors — Some account of the manner in which he received the blessing of sanctification — An extract on the same subject from the experience of the Rev. John Fletcher.

After the expiration of Mr. Bramwell's apprenticeship, his parents removed from Elswick to Preston, for the sole purpose of enjoying without interruption the society and converse of their son, for whose religious character they entertained the highest esteem. But how greatly were they mortified when they understood that he had begun to associate with the Methodists! They were so much exasperated, that they threatened to render him no pecuniary assistance toward enabling him to commence business. This, however, had no effect upon him; for he had been taught, that in order to be an approved disciple of Christ it might in some cases be absolutely necessary to "forsake both father and mother." Yet being very solicitous to promote their spiritual welfare, he continually urged on them the neccessity of a change of heart, and had strong and rational ground to hope, toward the close of their lives, that his labour had not been in vain.

About this time Mr. Wesley visited Preston; and some of Mr. Bramwell's Christian friends took an opportunity of introducing him into the company of that great man. Mr. Wesley looked attentively at him, and said, "Well, brother! can you praise God?" Mr. Bramwell replied, "No sir!" Mr. Wesley lifted up his hands, and smiling, said, "Well! but perhaps you will to night." And indeed so it came to pass; for that very night he found the comfort he had lost, and his soul was again enabled to rejoice in the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

This interview was rendered peculiarly beficial to Mr. Bramwell. He soon received a clearer manifestation of the love of God, and was more fully established in the way of the Lord. His desire for the salvation of sinners was intense; and this impelled him to labor in season. By his instrumentality prayer meetings at five o'clock in the morning were established. He became the leader of a class; and so zealous was he to promote the best interests of his fellow creatures, that he began to exhort them to flee from the wrath to come.

Very soon after Mr. Wesley's visit, Mr. Bramwell was appointed a local preacher. Not satisfied however with laboring to save souls at Preston, he preached throughout its neighborhood, and that part of Lancashire, comprising a considerable tract of country, called the Fylde. It is said that his first text was, "Prepare to meet thy God!" In visiting most of the villages in the neighborhood, he met with violent opposition and persecution, so that he might be truly said to have gone with his life in his hand.

He had frequent struggles concerning his call to the ministry, and the subject lay with such weight upon his mind, that he has been known to spend a considerable portion of the night in wrestling with God for Divine direction in this important matter. His agony in prayer on these occasions was great; the sweat frequently poured down his face. And in allusion to this subject and the exqisite perplexity of mind in which he was plunged, he often exclaimed to an intimate friend, "Robert! what shall I do?"

His feelings may, in some measure, be conceived, from the following circumstance related by himself: — He was walking one day, with some friends, over Preston-Moor, (about a mile and a half from the town,) when one of them asked him if he knew the place where the Rev. Isaac Ambrose* was accustomed to spend a mouth in retirement every

* It is related by the biographer of this heavenly minded man, that he spent the last years of his life in Preston; and that it was his custom annually to retire into wood near the moor, and there to secrete himself for an entire month in a small hut, avoiding all human society and converse, and devoting his whole attention to Divine contemplation and fervent prayer. By this method he was better fitted, during the remainder of each year, for the services of his sacred calling; and it was generally observed concerning him, that a peculiar unction accompanied his ministrations.

year, and employ himself day and night in importunate prayer before God for the prosperity of his work. Mr. Bramwell replied, "No! but under a certain hill near this place," where there was a large sand hole, "I once spent thirty-six hours together in prayer to the Lord, that I might know his will concerning me."

Although he was thus the subject of much anxiety and temptation, yet he was often encouraged by seeing the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hand. Under his sermons multitudes were convinced of sin, and many received a knowledge of their acceptance with God. Ann Cutler, or, as she was more familiarly called, "Praying Nanny," a woman remarkable for holiness, was one of the earliest fruits of his labors. She resided at a village near Preston, in which Mr. Bramwell frequently preached.

In the work of the ministry he spared neither exertion nor expense. He sometimes paid five shillings for the hire of a horse, on the Sabbath; and rode forty or fifty miles, preaching three or four times, and that very often in the open air. But it was his usual practice to walk on these occasions.

Striking interpositions of Providence were extended to him on many emergencies: — Once as he was returning from preaching, his horse fell and threw him over its head with great violence to a considerable distance. For a long time he lay senseless; but on recovering from the shock he rode forward to Preston, and preached the same evening without any medical assistance. But the consequences of this fall had nearly proved fatal, for he became extremely ill, and his health was with difficulty restored.

Having experienced the pardoning mercy of God, he walked in the fear of the Lord, and enjoyed the comfort of the Holy Ghost. That he might more clearly receive what was his Christian calling, and enjoy all the salvation purchased by the blood of Christ, he regularly perused the sacred volume, and implored Divine direction. Being obedient to the teachings of the Spirit, it was not long before he was convinced of the necessity of a farther work of grace upon his heart. He now saw that it was his privilege to be cleansed from all sin. Miss Brew, now Mrs. George Barker, heard him relate the manner in which he received this great blessing of entire sanctification, nearly in the following words: "I was for some time deeply convinced of my need of purity, and sought it carefully with tears and entreaties, and sacrifice; thinking nothing too much to give up, nothing too much to do or suffer, — if I might but attain this pearl of great price. Yet I found it not; nor knew the reason why, till the Lord showed me I had erred in the way of seeking it I did not seek it *by faith alone*, but, as it were, *by the works of the law*. Being now convinced of my error, I sought the blessing by faith only.

Still it tarried a little, but I waited for it in the way of faith. When in the house of a friend at Liverpool, whither I had gone to settle some temporal affairs previously to my going out to travel, I was sitting," said he, "as it might be on this chair," pointing to the chair on which he sat, "with my mind engaged in various meditations concerning my affairs and future prospects, my heart now and then lifted up to God, but not particularly about this blessing, — heaven came down to earth; it came to my soul. The Lord, for whom I had waited, came suddenly to the temple of my heart; and I had an immediate evidence that this was the blessing I had for some time been seeking. My soul was then all wonder, love, and praise. It is now about twenty-six years ago; I have walked in this liberty ever since. Glory be to God! I have been kept by his power. By faith I stand. In this as in all other instances, I have proved the devil to be a liar: — he suggested to me a few minutes after I received the blessing, that I should not hold it long, — it was too great to be retained, — and that I had better not profess it."

Proceeding, he said, "I walked fifteen miles that night to a place where I had an appointment to preach; and, at every step I trod, the temptation was repeated, 'Do not profess sanctification, for thou wilt lose it.' But in preaching that night, the temptation was removed, and my soul was again filled with glory and with God. I then declared to the people what God had done for my soul; and I have done so on every proper occasion since that time, believing it to be a duty incumbent upon me. For God does not impart blessings to his children to be concealed in their own bosoms, but to be made known to all who fear him and desire the enjoyment of the same privileges. I think such a blessing cannot be retained, without professing it at every fit opportunity; for thus we glorify God, and 'with the mouth make confession unto salvation.'"

This account is much in unison with the following declarations on the same subject by the Rev. John Fletcher, of Madeley. They are extracted from the diary of that excellent woman, the late Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers; and are here inserted that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word of this glorious doctrine *may be established*."

"Leeds, Aug. 24, 1781. — That dear man of God, Mr. Fletcher, came with Miss Bosanquet, (now Mrs. Fletcher,) to dine at Mr. Smith's in Park-Row; and also to meet the select society. After dinner, I took an opportunity to beg he would explain an expression he once used to Miss Loxdale in a letter, viz. 'That on all who are renewed in love, God bestows the gift of prophesy.' He called for the Bible, — then read and sweetly explained the second chapter of the Acts: observing, to 'prophesy,' in the sense *he* meant, was to magnify God with the *new heart* of love, and the *new tongue* of praise, as they did who, on the day of Pentecost, were filled with the Holy Ghost! — and he insisted that believers

are now called to make the same confession, seeing we may all prove the same baptismal fire. He showed that the day of Pentecost was only the *opening* of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, — the great promise of the Father! And that 'the latter day glory,' which he believed was near at hand, should far *exceed* the first effusion of the Spirit. Therefore seeing *they* then bore witness to the grace of our Lord, so should *we*; and, like them, spread the flame of love! Then, after singing a hymn, he cried, — 'O to be filled with the Holy Ghost! I want to be filled! O my friends, let us wrestle for a more abundant outpouring of the Spirit!' To me he said, 'Come, my sister, will *you* covenant with me this day to pray for the *fulness of the Spirit?* Will *you* be a witness for Jesus?' — I answered, with flowing tears, — 'In the strength of Jesus I will.' He cried, 'Glory be to God! Lord, strengthen thy handmaid to keep this covenant even unto death.' He then said, — 'My dear brethren and sisters, God is here! I feel him in this place! But I would hide my face in the dust, because I have been ashamed to declare what he hath done for me! For years I have grieved his Spirit, — but I am deeply humbled: and he has again restored my soul! Last Wednesday evening he spoke to me by these words, "Reckon yourselves therefore to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." I obeyed the voice of God: I now obey it; and tell you all, to the praise of his love, *I am freed from sin!* Yes, I rejoice to declare it, and to bear witness to the glory of his grace, that "I am dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ," who is my Lord and King! I received this blessing four or five times before; but I lost it by not observing the order of God, who hath told us, "With the heart, man believeth unto righteousness; and with the *mouth, confession* is made unto salvation." But the enemy offered his bait under various colours, to keep me from a public declaration of what my Lord had wrought.

"'When I first received his grace, Satan bid me wait awhile, till I saw more of the *fruits*; I resolved to do so, but I soon began to doubt of the *witness*, which before I had felt in my heart; and was in a little time sensible I had lost both. A second time, after receiving this salvation, (with shame I confess it,) I was kept from being a witness for my Lord, by the suggestion, "Thou art a public character; the eyes of *all* are upon *thee;* and if, as before, by *any* means thou lose the blessing, it will be a dishonor to the doctrine of *heart holiness*, &c." I held my peace, and again forfeited the gift of God! At another time, I was prevailed upon to hide by reasoning, — "How few, even of the children of God, will receive this testimony! many of them supposing every transgression of the Adamic law is sin: and therefore if I profess myself to be free from sin, *all* these will give my profession the lie, because I am not free in *their* sense: — am not free from ignorance, mistakes and infir-

nities. I will therefore enjoy what God has wrought in me, but I will not say I am perfect in love." Alas! I soon found again,—"He that hideth his Lord's talent and improveth it not, from that unprofitable servant shall be taken away even that he hath."

"'Now, my brethren, you see my folly! I have confessed it in your presence, and *now* I resolve, before you all, to confess my Master! I will confess him to all the world! And I declare unto you, in the presence of God, the HOLY TRINITY, I am now "dead indeed unto sin." I do not say; "I am crucified with Christ;" because, some of our well-meaning brethren say, "By *this* can only be meant a *gradual dying*,"—but I profess unto you, "I am dead unto sin, and alive unto God." And remember,—all this is "through Jesus Christ our Lord!" He is my PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING! My indwelling holiness! MY ALL IN ALL! I wait for the fulfilment of that prayer,—"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us;—and that they may be one, even as we are one." O for that pure Baptismal flame! O for the fulness of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost! Pray, pray, pray for this! This shall make us all of one heart and of one soul! Pray for *gifts*—for the gift of *utterance:* and confess your royal Master! A man without gifts is like the king in disguise: he appears as a subject only. You are *kings and priests unto God;* put on, therefore, your robes, and wear, on your *garter*, HOLINESS TO THE LORD!' "A few days after this, I heard Mr. Fletcher preach from the same subject; which greatly encouraged and strengthened me. He invitited all who felt the need of full redemption to believe *now* for this great salvation. He observed,—'As when you reckon with your creditor, or with your host; and as, when you have paid all, you reckon yourselves free; so, now reckon with God,—Jesus hath paid all: and he hath paid for thee! hath purchased *thy pardon* and *holiness*. Therefore it is now God's command,—"Reckon thyself dead indeed unto sin;" and thou art alive unto God from this hour! O begin, begin to reckon now! Fear not,—believe, believe! And continue to believe every moment; so shalt thou continue free. For it is retained, as it is received, by *faith alone*. And whosover thou art that perseveringly believest, it will be as a fire in thy bosom, and constrain thee to confess with thy mouth, thy LORD AND KING JESUS! And, in spreading the sacred flame of love, thou shalt still be saved to the uttermost.'

"He also dwelt largely on those words, 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' He asked, 'How din sin abound? Has it not overspread your whole soul? Were not all your passions, tempers, propensities, and affections, inordinate and evil? Did not pride, anger, self-will, and unbelief, all reign in you? And when the Spirit of God strove with you, did you not repel all his convictions, and put him far from you? Well, my brethren, "Ye were *then* the servants of sin, and were

free from righteousness: but now, being free from sin, ye become servants to God;" and holiness shall overspread your whole soul: so that all your tempers and passions shall be henceforth regulated and governed by HIM who now sitteth upon the trone of your heart, making all things new! They shall therefore be *all* holy. And as you once resisted the Holy Spirit, so now you shall have power as easily to resists all the subtled frauds or fierce attacks of Satan. Yea, his suggesstions to evil shall be like a ball thrown against a wall of brass! It shall rebound back again; and you shall know what that meaneth—"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."'

"He then, with lifted hands, cried, 'Who will thus be saved? Who will believe the report? You are only in an improper sense called belivers who reject this. Who is a believer? One that believes *a few things* which his God hath spoken? Nay, but one who believes *all* that ever proceeded out of his mouth! Here then is the word of the Lord, "As sin abounded, grace shall much more abound! As no *good thing* was in you by nature, so now no *evil thing* shall remain! Do you believe this? Or, are you a *half* believer, only? Come, Jesus is offered to thee as a *perfect Saviour*; take him and he will make thee a *perfect saint!* O ye half believers, will you still plead for the murderers of your Lord? Which of these will you hide as a serpent in your bosom? Shall it be anger, pride, self-will, or *accursed* unbelief? O be no longer befooled! "Bring these enemies to thy Lord, and let him slay them."' "Some days after this, being in Mr. Fletcher's company, he took me by the hand, and said,—'Glory be to God for *you*, my sister!—still bear a noble testimony for your Lord. Do you repent your confession of his salvation?' I answered, *Blessed be God, I do not.* At going away he again took me by my hand, saying, with eyes and heart lifted up,—'Bless her, heavenly Power!' It seemed as if an instant answer was given, and a beam of glory let down!—I was filled with deep humility and love. Yea, my whole soul overflowed with unutterable sweetness."

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. Bramwell is called to supply the place of an itinerant preacher in Liverpool—He is recalled at the earnest request of his Preston friends—He commences business on his own account—Is again solicited by Dr. Coke to become an itinerant preacher—After some consideration, he embraces the offer, and begins to travel in the Kent circuit—His manner of life, and ardent desire for the conversion of sinners—He is again brought into doubt respecting his call to the ministry—Preaches at the place where seven men were executed—A remarkable dream.

Mr. Bramwell was much blessed in his labors as a local preacher; and it was soon the unanimous sentiment of the church, that he was calculated for a much more extended sphere of usefulness. Indeed, for four years after he was free from his apprenticeship, he had himself felt a powerful persuasion that he was called by the great Head of the Church to the exercise of the ministry. On this account he had purposely abstained from engaging in any secular employment for his own benefit, although he had an opportunity of doing it to great advantage. During the whole of this period he had been occupied in introducing the doctrines and the discipline of the Methodists into many of the uncivilized districts around Preston, in a manner the most zealous and disinterested,—his exertions being made entirely at his own charge. Such was the general impression which he had of his designation to serve God in the Gospel of his Son. But with him, as with many other eminent heralds of Christ, this impression was subject to some fluctuating doubts; and it occasionally became the groundwork of Satan's buffeting and temptation. Yet it still retained its firm hold on his mind, and impelled him to continue his services in that best of causes, to which he considered himself devoted.

About that time some new places had been added to Liverpool circuit. It therefore became requisite to have an additional preacher. Mr. Bramwell, having been recommended by the superintendent; was appointed by Mr. Wesley to go there and officiate as an itinerant preacher till the following conference. He immediately complied; but he had not been long employed in this capacity before a strong representation was made by his friends at Preston, to induce Mr. Wesley to recall him, as the work of God in that town was then increasing, and Mr. Bramwell's labors were particularly required for its furtherance. To this request Mr. Wesley acceded, and Mr. Bramwell accordingly returned to Preston, to the great joy of those who had known him and felt the power of his preaching. By this arrangement, his parents, who had almost given him up as a desperate seceder from their principles were exceedingly gratified, and fondley hoped to regain their former influence over him.

He now thought his lot determined, and himself providentially settled for life in Preston. He therefore commenced the business to which he had served an apprenticeship. But the Lord had prepared for him a far more important station, in which he had designed him to act a most conspicuous part. Not many months after he had taken a shop and house, Dr. Coke wrote to him several times, and earnestly requested him to give up his business, become an itinerant preacher, and travel in the Kent circuit. Against the doctor's arguments very powerful obstacles presented themselves: Mr. Bramwell was comfortably settled in business; his worldly prospects were peculiarly inviting, and he had formed an honorable and intimate connection with a pious young lady, a native of Preston, who had been converted under his preaching at an early period of his ministrations. He was surrounded by his family connections. His father and mother had shown themselves less bigoted in religious matters, and had evinced something resembling an esteem for Methodism. In fine, every thing concurred to invite him to sit down, acquire a fortune, and enjoy himself among his friends.

This was a most important crisis in his life; and his feelings on the occasion may be more easily conceived than expressed. He earnestly sought direction from Heaven, and consulted his Christian friends. At length, believing that he was called of God to devote himself entirely to the work of the ministry, he no longer conferred with flesh and blood, but immediately settled his temporal affairs, purchased a horse and a pair of saddle bags, and rode to the Kent circuit, in the winter of 1785,—a distance of about three hundred miles.

When Mr. Bramwell reached Canterbury, he found the society in a very languid state, a division having taken place some time previous to his arrival. But his entrance into the circuit, with that man of God, Mr. Shadford, was the means of such a revival as had not been witnessed for many years. Mr. Bramwell adopted, from Mr. Shadford, a plan of more extensive usefulness and devotedness to God; and though he afterward studied the lives of eminent ministers, and particularly that of Mr. T. Walsh, yet he never ceased to remember and imitate his venerable colleague. The people regarded Mr. Bramwell as a messenger of God, and expressed an earnest wish, that those preachers who should afterward labor among them, might always manifest the zeal, love, and disinterestedness in the sacred cause.

His genuine piety and affectionate concern for the welfare of souls, and for the prosperity of the work of God were evinced in the whole of his deportment among the people, and he was so truly consistent, that he never appeared to lose sight of his character as a Christian minister. Into whatever company he went, he seemed to carry with him a consciousness of the Divine presence, which influenced the whole of his conduct. His visits were generally short, and he had such a happy method

of improving the present moment, that *levity* and *trifling* could never appear in his presence. Frequently when at prayer, so powerfully did he wrestle with God that the room seemed filled with the Divine glory, in a manner the most extraordinary; which made some persons ready to imagine, that the very boards shook under them.

As there were many young persons added to the society in that circuit, he saw it necessary to guard them against the temptations to which young people are exposed; and to give greater effect to his exhortations, he addressed the different sexes separately. One Sunday evening he would request the women in the society to stop, and not one of the other sex to be present. The following Sabbath he would meet all the men, and them only. This method had a good effect; it prevented the appearance of partiality, and gave him an opportunity of using much plainness of speech, and a greater degree of faithfulness. His instructions could not fail to be well received, because they were given with affection; while the correctness of his own deportment rendered him unimpeachable.

The prayer meetings were generally held in private houses; and as he knew the spiritual condition of certain persons present, when the meetings were over, he sometimes detained the people, saying, "Stop, friends! let us spend a few moments more for such and such a person. Probably such a one may be present and yet unblessed." At a meeting of this kind, while Mr. Bramwell was agonizing in prayer, a powerful effusion of the Spirit descended upon the people, as though a flash of lightning had darted into the room. All present were deeply affected: and at that moment Mrs. Parnell, who was in great distress, received a clear manifestation of the pardoning love of God.

Though his labors were crowned with signal success, yet he was often greatly depressed in spirit, and tempted to leave the work in which he was engaged. On one of these occasions, he went to unbosom his mind to an old friend, in whose opinion he placed the greatest confidence. "Billy," said the old man, "I will tell thee what thou must do; thou must go into thy closet, lock thyself up, and there take a review of thy life. If thou canst find that God has blessed thee with a *single mercy*, praise him for it." Mr. Bramwell went and practised the advice which the old man had recommended, and immediately the remembrance of one mercy after another entered his mind. He saw that his whole life was marked with mercy. Gratitude sprung up in his heart. He broke forth in praises to God, took encouragement, and went forward in the name of the Lord. He often remarked that, in such cases, it is a great blessing to have a judicious friend at hand. Like a faithful servant, he lost no opportunity of doing good whenever an occasion presented itself, although numerous dangers and difficulties might surround him in the attempt. Thus when seven young men were condemned to be hanged

at Maidstone, another young preacher and he, on hearing of the intended execution, were much affected, and thought that one of them ought to preach on the occasion. After mature reflection, it was determined that Mr. Bramwell should address the assembled multitude. A large blockstone became his pulpit. When he began to speak to the immense concourse of people, the general cry was, "Knock the fellow down! Kill him!" At this moment, a gentleman on horseback rode among the crowd, and cried, "He is a good man! let him alone! hear him!" Through this stranger's manly interference, he was permitted to proceed and to finish his discourse. But he never knew the person to whom he was then indebted for a peaceful congregation.

In the same circuit he was forewarned, in a dream, of approaching danger. He dreamed that he was waylaid in a certain road by some men, who wished to kill him. Having to go that way some time afterward, his dream occured to him; he thought that there might be something intended by it; he therefore determined to turn aside, and went another way. By adopting this resolution, he providentially escaped; for, as he afterward found, certain men of bad character had been waiting for him at that very time with a fixed resolution to murder him, if he had passed along the road by which he usually went.

He was once desired to pray with an unhappy female who was very ill, and who had been much addicted to drunkenness. Some time before, her husband had become pious, and had often invited Mr. Bramwell to his house. This woman had been raised several times in answer to his prayers. He was sent for once more in haste from his circuit to pray for her. When he arrived, he and her husband knelt down; and after being silent a few minutes he exclaimed, "I can pray no more! The Lord will not answer: She will now die! and in the course of a few hours, the unhappy woman died.

This was the first year of his itinerant ministry, during which he did not spare himself, but was "in labors more abundant." By the Spirit of God he was instructed in many things that concerned the great work in which he was engaged. He delighted in his sacred calling; and, from the success which attended his preaching, he was encouraged with increased earnestness to "do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry."

CHAPTER V.

Mr. Bramwell's marriage—Some misunderstanding with Mr. Wesley—By an extraordinary chain of circumstances, he is directed to labor in the Blackburn circuit—His continued diligence—The mode of educating his children—His appointment to the Colne circuit.

It appears that Mr. Bramwell was to have been married on his return from Liverpool; but as Dr. Coke had repeatedly solicited him to go to Kent, he had the firmness to bid adieu to the object of his affections, and did not see her again until a year and a half had elapsed.

Previous, however, to his acquiescence with Dr. Coke's request, he informed him that he could only go on condition that he might be married as soon as he returned. What the Dr. said to him is not now known; but Mr. Bramwell always understood that he had obtained his promise and consent. He regularly corresponded with the young lady, Miss E. Byrom, who was of a very respectable family; and on his return to Preston, they were married accordingly, in July, 1787. At the conference for the same year he was appointed by Mr. Wesley to labor in the Lynn circuit: but, as Mrs. Bramwell could not leave Preston on account of the arrangement of some family concerns, he thought it was not his duty to go to Lynn, and wrote to Mr. Wesley to that effect. Mr. W. did not think proper to appoint him to any other circuit, although he was earnestly requested to do so by Mr. Shadford, and some other aged preachers, who regarded Mr. Bramwell as an eminently useful and holy young man. His name therefore remained on the stations for Lynn, but he continued in Preston.

To a man more inflated with an idea of his own consequence than Mr. Bramwell was, or less fervent and sincere in his wishes for the salvation of sinners, this second deferring of his hopes would have been most grievous and distressing. But though he was naturally of a sanguine disposition, the grace of God had humbled his views and made him willing to behold the glorious remedy of saving truth administered by any other hands than his own. He did not rate his ministerial talents so highly as to imagine with some weaklings that when he was quiescent, the wheels of Christ's church would not move at all, or would only have a tardy motion. He very properly considered it a high honor to have "a dispensation of the Gospel committed to him" by Christ Jesus, and to bear some humble, yet active part in the grand operations of human redemption. In the bare anticipation of this he had rejoiced, when he was first called to Liverpool. And when he was so honorably remanded to Preston, to move in an humbler sphere, and preach the glad tidings of peace among his friends and relatives, he had felt the summons to be no small trial. Yet to that which he deemed a providential call,

he had yielded a cheerful obedience. He had now again dedicated himself wholly to the work of the ministry, and by an unexpected occurrence* was compelled to desist from his labors as an itinerant preacher. This was a season in which Satan assailed him with heavy temptations. But having committed nothing worthy of reproach, he maintained his wonted firmness of spirit. He did not, like many, sullenly refuse to lend his hearty co-operation to the cause of God; but with pleasure embraced every opportunity of declaring the glad tidings of salvation. It is not here meant to be insinuated, that Mr. Bramwell showed through out this affair any disposition of mind allied to stoical apathy. On the contrary, this proved to him a period of considerable anxiety. It called for the exercise of all the faith and patience of which he was possessed. Not knowing how to act, he sometimes thought, that after all, the Lord might still intend him to be a man of business. But he recollected the word of the Lord, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy path." He gave himself to prayer, asked counsel of God, and was always ready to say, "Speak, Lord! thy servant heareth." His way was soon made plain, and that in a manner which he could never have anticipated.

In order more clearly to elucidate this circumstance, it may be necessary to produce the following account, related by Mr. James Gray, and inserted in the Methodist Magazine for March, 1818:

"The Bristol conference for 1786 appointed Messrs. Joshua Keighly and Edward Burbeck to labor in the Inverness circuit. They met a Aberdeen, and set off for that circuit together; when approaching within

* When, in compliance with Dr. Coke's entreaties, he consented to give up his business and take a circuit, it was a stipulation between the doctor and him, that Mr. B. should not be required to wait the usual period of probation before his marriage. Dr. Coke also promised him the benefit of his good offices with Mr. Wesley, for his appointment to the Blackburn circuit. The doctor had either been unsuccessful in his application to Mr. W. or had omitted the mention of all the particulars; for Mr. B. was nominated for the Lynn circuit. He accounted this a breach of engagement; and in his subsequent correspondence with Mr. W., it is probable that he mentioned without hesitation his recent marriage with Miss Byrom, a circumstance which Mr. W. had not before known, and which for the moment might give him some umbrage.

The key to the whole of this proceeding is, that, in the latter part of Mr. Wesley's life, the care of many of the societies devolved on Dr. Coke; and Mr. Bramwell had stipulated with the proxy instead of the principal. Yet there was not even the shadow of bad faith on the part of Dr. C. He did not think it necessary on every occasion of this kind, to burden Mr. W.'s mind with matters of minor importance; and he rejoiced greatly, when Mr. W., a few weeks afterward, so promptly appointed Mr. B. to the circuit of his choice.

two miles of Keith, on the high hill which overlooks it, in the dusk of the evening about sunset, they beheld, about twenty yards from them, a dark shade like a screen drawn right across the road. They took courage and rode up to it, which divided and opened like a two-leaf gate and as they passed through it, an audible voice said, 'You may pass on to your circuit, but shall never return to England.'

"This prediction was actually accomplished, in the death of these two holy men of God in the course of the year. They slept at Keith that night, and next noon arrived at Elgin, where I then lived: I called at their lodgings, and found Mr. Keighly reading, and Mr. Burbeck had gone to bed, having rested none the preceding night, owing to the thoughts of the vision and the voice. Mr. Keighly then told me solemly and seriously what I have related above.

"They continued to fulfil the duties of their ministry until the end of July, about the time of the sitting of conference; when Mr. Keighly was seized with a brain fever, and died on the eight day. See my letter to Mr. Wesley, with a short account of his death published in July, 1788.*

Mr. Burbeck came four days after from Inverness, and lodged with me, until he received his appointment from conference, which was for the Blackburn circuit. He seemed anxious to get out of our circuit, that he might defeat the prediction. In pursuing his journey to Keith, he was taken ill, four miles before he reached that village, and was carried thither sick of a fever, and died on the ninth day.

* As some additional particulars occur in the account of Mr. Joshua Keighly, to which Mr. Gray here refers, they are subjoined for the information of the pious reader:—

"He never expected his illness to be unto death, till about three days before he died: when he said, 'You shall have a two-fold preacher here before Sunday.'

"As there was no preacher on the spot, I took charge of his remains; wrapt them in linen, like his Lord and Master; gave letters of invitation to ministers and magistrates; and a gentleman gave me the use of his tomb to bury him in, which I gladly accepted.

"The people of Elgin lament the death of this pious young man, whose preaching and holy conversation were made so great a blessing to many. And had it not been for the violence of his disorder, I doubt not but he would have borne as good a testimony for God in his last moments, as he had done before for many years.

"When he was at Inverness last spring, he dreamed that he was condemned to die on the morrow. However, he obtained leave of the judge to go and acquaint his father with his fate, and to prepare him for the shock: which as soon as he had done, the judge appeared to him again, and said, 'I have got you a short respite; but, depend upon it, you shall die in Scotland.'

"How unaccountable is this on the infidel and Sadducean supposition? But how plain on that of a Christian!"

"Mr. Keighly was possessed of powerful natural talents, piety, and zeal for the salvation of the souls of men. Mr. Burbeck's constitution was nervous; but with a more pious, sincere, and upright minister, the church of Christ is seldom blessed."

Br. Burbeck's box arrived at Blackburn, and the society were in daily expectation of seeing him. But they were afflicted with the intelligence, that he had died in Scotland, on his way to the circuit. This providence was truly mysterious, and especially when the circumstances that preceded it are considered. The society at Blackburn wrote to Mr. Wesley concerning it, informing him that they were without a preacher, and, it is probable, some mention was made of Mr. Bramwell in the same letter. Mr. Wesley immediately replied, by requesting Mr. Bramwell to take the Blackburn circuit, and labor in Mr. Burbeck's place.

To him and his friends this event appeared almost miraculous, and no room was left for the reasoning of unbelief. He was now fully persuaded that he was called of God, and instantly prepared for his new station. Had he wished to fix upon a circuit that would have been the most convenient for himself and his wife, it would have been Blackburn, which then included the town of Preston, where it was necessary that Mrs. B. should remain until her temporal and domestic affairs were regulated and finally settled. In the whole of this transaction it is easy to trace the footsteps of the Almighty, who is never at a loss to accomplish his own infinitely wise and gracious purposes by a thousand wondrous "ways to foolish man unknown."

The society at Blackburn received Mr. Bramwell as an angel of the Lord. He left Mrs. B. at Preston, while he labored in the circuit with his usual acceptance and success. Even at this early period of his ministry, his Christian beneficence was truly remarkable; when he met with objects of distress, he often gave them his all. When he returned to Preston, to see Mrs. B., which was only once in a month, he generally requested her to supply him with more money, that he might have still father scope for the exercise of his charity.

While he remained at Blackburn, he was exposed to the various persecutions which then raged against the followers of Mr. Wesley. Religious liberty was at that time neither understood nor practised; and too frequently, those who ought to have redressed the wrong, were the most zealous in exciting it.

In visiting some places in this circuit, Mr. Bramwell was obliged to pass a tan yard where several bull dogs were kept. These were always let loose upon him, and he was obliged to defend himself from their ferocious attacks as well as he could. A large stick, pointed with iron, which he procured for the purpose, was his weapon of defence; it served also to assist him in walking. Notwithstanding this, his legs were frequently torn in a dangerous manner by these animals. The

remembrance of the sufferings he thus endured, caused him in the succeeding part of his life, to feel the greatest aversion to meet, alone and unprotected, dogs of this description. For many years afterward, and when the rights of toleration had become so far fixed as to render self defence unnecessary, the stick pointed with iron was preserved, in memory of the good offices which it had rendered to its owner.

We are now called to behold Mr. Bramwell in a different relation, and summoned to fulfil other important duties in life. Having entered into the marriage state with one who was in every respect suitable for him, he did not, like too many, relax in his zealous exertions, and become remiss in the discharge of his ministerial functions; but while he manifested the greatest kindness to her who shared largely in his affections, he seemed to feel the import of these words of the apostle, "It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none, —and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not: for the fashion of this world passeth away." On his return home from the circuit, his first inquiries in general were concerning spiritual things. He evinced the strongest desire to promote the best interests of a wife whom he ardently loved. Whenever he was called to leave her, he uniformly commended her to God in earnest prayer.

In September, 1788, the Lord blessed him with a son, whom he named George, after his father. Mrs. Bramwell was confined during his absence from Preston. But she was speedily raised up again; and having regained her former strength, was soon enabled to perform the part of a mother to the immortal deposit with which she had been entrusted. It was her strongest wish, as it was eminently Mr. Bramwell's, that this child, as well as all their future progeny, should be trained up in the service of God, to occupy the particular department which Providence might afterward assign to each of them. To store their infant minds with the best principles, at the same time that they were instructed in useful learning, Mr. Bramwell knew was the only proper way of qualifying them for filling any station to which they might be called.

He had read Mr. Wesley's advice concerning the duty of parents toward their children, and resolved to act accordingly. He therefore determined to break their wills at an early period, and not suffer them to cry aloud in his presence after they were ten months old. Although this may seem strange and unaccountable to those parents who criminally indulge their children, yet it is a fact which ought to be generally known, that Mr. Bramwell's children, when in health, were never permitted to cry aloud in his presence after they had attained to that age "He ruled well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." It must, however, be granted, that this would require a degree of apparent severity, which, if sanctioned in theory by parents in general, would probably never need to be adopted in practice. The

propriety of Mr. Wesley's assertion on this particular has often been questioned, and some have said, that had he been a parent himself, he would have been better informed. But, with Mr. Bramwell, this method was not problematical: he tried the experiment, and most salutary were the effects which it produced. His children feel to this day that they have the greatest reason to praise God for being favored in early life with the affectionate attentions of such a parent. The intense love which he entertained for all of them is evinced in various parts of the correspondence subjoined to this memoir.

At the conference of the year 1789, Mr. Bramwell was appointed to the Colne circuit, in Lancashire. He travelled there two years, and the Lord blessed his labors during the whole of that time in an eminent manner. He resided at Southfield, about two miles distant from Colne. This circuit was large in extent; and he was frequently thirty miles from home. Mrs. B. was now called to endure all those privations to which the wives of the preachers were subjected, in the commencement of Methodism. She had left her friends, and her home at Preston, to reside among strangers; and instead of enjoying the society of her husband which might have compensated for other inconveniences, so unremitting were his exertions, and so fervent his zeal in promoting the interests of religion and the conversion of sinners, that he was never at home excepting one night in the course of every six weeks.

In this circuit he was obliged to have recourse to his private property, and that of Mrs. B., for the means of subsistence, and for the indulgence of that benevolence, which according to his power, was boundless.

But amidst all the outward difficulties with which he had to contend "the pleasure of the Lord still prospered in his hand." "He went on his way rejoicing;" while by reading, meditation, and prayer, he continued sedulously to qualify himself for the important charge with which he had been entrusted. By this judicious course, he "studied to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." His "profiting soon appeared unto all men." They perceived that "the hand of the Lord was with him." And while he improved in gifts and graces, the people of his care "rejoiced in the light which was thus transmitted." Among those in the Colne circuit who received their first religious impressions under his ministry, many will be found to be "his crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming." And what feeling in this mortal state can be conceived more exquisite in anticipation than that of a beloved pastor presenting the redeemed of his flock before the throne of Jehovah, with, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me!"

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Bramwell's removal to the Dewsbury circuit—State of religion in that town and neighborhood—He gives himself to prayer—The work of God begins to prosper—Ann Cutler is rendered useful in the revival—Great numbers converted—A remarkable dream—Causes of his great popularity—Mr. Wesley's rules for a helper.

At the conference in 1791 Mr. Bramwell was stationed for Dewsbury. Before that period, some very unpleasant disputes had existed among the society in that place; in consequence of which a Mr. Atlay was called by the trustees to be their minister, and the chapel was then lost to the Methodist connection.

On Mr. Bramwell's arrival he soon found that religious animosities and foolish bickerings had nearly destroyed the religion of both parties. To a minister of Christ whose only desire is to see Zion in prosperity, such a state of things would be peculiarly afflictive, and perhaps few could have felt it more keenly than Mr. Bramwell. He mourned in private before the Lord; and from the commencement of his ministry among that people he resolved to enter into no disputes. His object was to win souls to Christ: with him the possession of chapels was a thing of little importance. Adverting to the state of the society, he on one occasion writes as follows: "I could not find a person who experienced sanctification, and but few who were clear in pardon. The societies in some places increased, but active religion scarcely appeared!"

Having witnessed the powerful effects of prayer in other places, he now began to supplicate the God of all grace. He exhorted the people to join him in this important duty; and, to afford them more frequent opportunities of doing this, he instituted prayer meetings at five o'clock in the morning. The blessed effects of these earnest intercessions were soon apparent. At a band meeting, in November, 1792, four persons entered into the glorious liberty of sanctification; one of whom, Mr. Joseph Drake, an itinerant preacher, who died in the year 1815, testified to the last of this great salvation. It has often been remarked, that when this doctrine is clearly and fully preached, and when a work of grace thus deepens in a society, there is generally a considerable increase of new converts: such was the case in the Dewsbury circuit.

About the same period, Ann Cutler was led to visit Dewsbury. It was her constant practice to rise between three and four o'clock in the morning and wrestle with God for a revival, while Mr. Bramwell was engaged in the same exercise at that early hour in another apartment. It was almost impossible for any one to take repose by sleep, or be un-

refreshed in spirit, while near two such zealous persons, who often relieved the burden of their souls by praying aloud. At length the Lord was graciously pleased to manifest his saving power among the people. Mr. Bramwell remarks, "As I was praying in my room, I received an answer from God in a particular way, and had the revival discovered to me in its manner and effects. I had no more doubt. All my grief was gone; I could say, 'The Lord will come; I know he will come, and that suddenly.'"

He then says, "Nothing appeared very particular till, under Nanny Cutler's prayer, one person received a clean heart. We were confident that the Lord would do the same for others.

"At a prayer meeting two found peace with God: and in that week two more received the same blessing. On the Sunday morning we had a love-feast for the bands, when several were much concerned for sanctification. One young woman received the blessing. On the Monday evening the bands met. A remarkable spirit of prayer was given to the people. Four persons received sanctification, and some were left in distress.

"Several who were the most prejudiced were suddenly struck, and in agonies groaned for deliverance. On the Thursday, one who had been exceedingly pained for purity of heart, for a fortnight was delivered.

"The work continued almost in every meeting; and sixty persons in and about Dewsbury received sanctification, and walked in that liberty. Our love-feasts began to be crowded, and people from every neighboring circuit visited us. Great numbers found pardon, and some perfect love. They went home and declared what God had done for them.

"The more I consulted the Acts of the Apostles, and Church history the more I was convinced that this was no new thing, either in its manner or effects; but that in every great work of God similar effects were produced. I consulted several of the senior brethren, who exhorted me to use every means to support the revival. Satan began to use his agents in different ways: some said one thing, and some another, but no man without the Spirit of God can properly judge of the matter."

The work then began to spread in almost every direction. In one quarter about one hundred new members were added to the society, and many believers were quickened, and excited to greater diligence and activity in the work of the Lord. Mr. Bramwell "rejoiced as one that had found great spoil." To see sinners awakened, penitents pardoned, and believers enjoying sanctfication,—afforded him the most lively satisfaction. This great revival occurred during the *second* year of his stay in Dewsbury. The *first* he describes as "a year of hard labor and much grief." It was the season of "his sowing in tears," but in the second year "he reaped in joy." On more occasions than

this, he verified in his own experience that declaration of the Psalmist, 'He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with *rejoicing*, bringing his *sheaves* with him." Being a man, "strong in faith, he continued instant in prayer." While he waited on the Lord, he was of good courage, and the Lord strengthened his heart. From the time when he first entered on his labors in the Dewsbury circuit, his heart would have fainted within him, "unless he had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Thus was his joy fulfilled in many of the souls confided to his care by the great Shepherd. In order to be rendered more extensively useful, he visited them from house to house; and advised, reproved, exhorted or comforted them, as circumstances might require. In some instances his great concern for the temporal, as well as the spiritual welfare of the people, was instrumental in effecting the conversion of those who had before been careless and unconcerned about their personal salvation. His uniform conduct, and his consientious and undeviating attention to the important duties of the ministry, soon rendered him extremely popular: and even many of the rich and honorable frequently attended his preaching.

About this time his intimate friend, Mr. John Nelson, had a remarkable dream: he thought he saw Mr. Bramwell standing on the top of a very high ladder, which appeared to be elevated in a perpendicular direction, its base resting on the ground; but it was without any support or stay at its summit. From this Mr. Nelson inferred, that Mr. Bramwell was placed in a perilous situation. He immediately wrote and informed him of the dream; and by way of caution, added, that he appeared in that dream "to have mounted as high as he could get." "Yes," replied Mr. Bramwell, when he answered his letter, "but did you see me fall?"

For the information of those persons who may express some surprise at the popularity which Mr. Bramwell gained in the early part of his ministry, and which attended him to the close of life,—it is necessary to state, that he was a man who strictly observed the twelve RULES which are given in "The Large Minutes," respecting the office and duty of a Methodist preacher. He was one of those primitive HELPERS in whom Mr. Wesley delighted, who carry with them the unction, life and power of godliness.

The following most important rules Mr. Bramwell particularly regarded: they were the guides of his conduct, yet always in subordination to the Holy Scriptures. He viewed them indeed as an exposition of several Scriptural directions; and valued them highly, on account of their salutary consequences.

"Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never WHILE away time, nor spend more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

"Be serious. Let your motto be, *Holiness to the Lord.* Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

"Believe evil of no one unless fully proved: take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

"Speak evil of no one; else YOUR word especially would eat as doth a canker: keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

"Tell every one what you think wrong in him, lovingly and plainly, and as soon as may be else it will fester in your own heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

"Do not affect the gentleman. A preacher of the Gospel is the servant of all.

"Be ashamed of nothing but sin, no, not of cleaning your own shoes when necessary.

"Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them, and that for conscience' sake.

"You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most.

"Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the Gospel, and in union with your brethren. As such, it is your part to employ your time as our rules direct; partly in preaching and visiting from house to house: partly in reading, meditation, and prayer.

"Observe: It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care merely of this or that society: but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance; and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord."

Early rising was also a point on which Mr. Wesley uniformly insisted. He required it of every one that became a helper.

These rules did not lie inactive in Mr. Bramwell's mind, as a dead letter: he practised them, because he conceived they were the specific terms of his admission into the Christian ministry; and he could esteem himself a true Methodist HELPER no longer than while he acted agreeably to their spirit and intent. In the character which he acquired of being a strict disciplinarian, it was evident that the greatest severity was exercised on himself, and that the law by which he had to govern others, was, in its execution, a system of real mildness.

Who does not perceive that he who adheres conscientiously to these, and similar directions, must be a pious and useful character? Such was Mr. Bramwell. By a constant observance of these excellent regulations, he became "a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, being prepared unto every good work," 2 Tim. ii, 21.

Into whatever circuit he went, the people immediately perceived, from the zealous manner in which he discharged the duties of his sacred calling, that he considered the work of the ministry to be no trifling occupation. The simplicity of the method "by which it hath pleased God, in his infinite wisdom, to save them that believe," excited his admiration. And however it might be stigmatized, in the view of human wisdom, as "the foolishness of preaching,"—he felt in himself, and perceived in others, that the declaration of "CHRIST CRUCIFIED," universally proved to be "CHRIST *the* POWER *of God and the* WISDOM *of God.*" Having these just views of the divinely appointed means of salvation, he meditated on the things which related to his labors; and adopted those plans which he deemed best calculated to render them efficient and acceptable. He endeavored truly to make it

All his busines here below
To cry, BEHOLD THE LAMB!

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Bramwell's labors and success in the Birstal circuit—A great revival —Answers to prayer — Reflections on this revival.

MR. BRAMWELL was appointed, in the year 1793, to labor in the Birstal circuit. A revival of the work of God had commenced in the preceding year, under the ministry of Messrs. Jackson and Smith. On his entrance into this circuit, he did not use any extraordinary public efforts, but prayed much in private, sometimes whole nights, and exhorted every one in society to adopt the same practice. These nighs were occasionally spent in intercessions before the mercy seat of God, in behalf of certain individuals, for whose spiritual welfare he felt an uncommon concern.

At the love-feast on Christmas day, 1793, the Lord poured out his Spirit in a very remarkable manner. Many persons were clearly awakened, and not less than fifty souls "obtained redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of sins." Some of these "continued faithful unto death," and have long ago "received a crown of life;" and others are "pressing toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

His colleague could not endure the apparent confusion which was frequent on these occasions. He therefore thought it his duty to oppose the revival, and his conduct influenced the leaders, who for a time maintained a cautious reserve, and kept at a great distance, not knowing what judgment to form about these strange proceedings. One of the most judicious of them, Mr. Thomas Crowther, of Gomersal, de-

clares the change of his sentiments thus; "In the love-feast on Christmas day, I had such a conviction that this work was of God as caused me immediately to close in with it, and to give it, not only my approval, but my hearty co-operation. When I came out of the chapel on that day, several of the leaders gathered around me, and asked me what I still thought about it. I replied, 'We have long been praying for a revival of religion, and now when it is granted to us, shall we be dissatisfied, and oppose its progress, because it does not exactly accord with our weak ideas, and does not manifest itself in the particular manner in which we expected it?'" From this time all the leaders joined heartily with Mr. Bramwell in the work, and their united labors were crowned with abundant success. In the Birstal society alone, six leaders are now living, who were converted during the revival, under Mr. Bramwell's ministry; independently of many other leaders belonging to different societies in the circuit, who obtained, at the same time, "like precious faith" with them.

The next love-feast, held on Easter Sunday, was also a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord: other fifty souls were "turned from darkness to light."

About this time an extraordinary influence went forth and began to manifest itself among the people. Persons of every rank attended the preaching of the word; all the chapels, and the private houses appropriated to the purposes of divine worship, were exceedingly crowded.

It was customary with Mr. Bramwell when in the country, to visit the different familes of his hearers, and pray with each of them. In company, he constantly endeavored to redeem the time by the most profitable exercises. He would not converse, on trifling subjects; but the most common theme of his discourse was, "What shall we do to praise the Lord more, to promote his glory, and obtain greater blessings?" His sermons were attended with such mighty power, that several persons were generally in distress before the conclusion of the service. After preaching he often desired those who felt disposed, to stop and unite with him in holding a prayer meeting: so that, in general, it was ten or eleven o'clock at night before they left the chapel.

When opportunities offered, he occasionally held watch-nights in the circuit in private houses. In one held at Little Gomersal, there appeared to be nothing particular at the beginning. At ten o'clock Mr. Bramwell was about to conclude; but he commenced again, and continued engaged in prayer until twelve o'clock. At that hour he still felt unwilling to break off, and, like Jacob, said in his heart,

> With thee all night I mean to stay,
> And wrestle till the break of day.

In a short time a young woman cried aloud for mercy; several more were soon after in deep distress: and before four o'clock in the morn-

ing fifteen souls enjoyed a sense of pardon, and were made glad in the God of their salvation. At another wach-night held in Hunsworth Lane, about the same time, there were many souls saved. Those meetings were frequent in several parts of the circuit, and were always attended with a manifest blessing.

After preaching at Morley one evening, he went into a friend's house to pray for a person in distress, and continued praying for the space of two hours. All that were present prayed in rotation more than once; but he prayed alternately with every one that engaged in the exercise. While he and his friends were thus employed, a young man a stranger to the Methodists, who was passing by, heard them, and approached the door to listen: he was immediately seized with conviction, fell down on his knees, and, after remaining out of doors in that situation some time, entered the house and knelt down. He was seen to tremble exceedingly, and soon afterward fell down on the floor: he did not, however, lie long in that situation, but arose and began to praise God for pardoning his iniquities, and giving him to enjoy the light of his reconciled countenance.

"So mightily grew the work of God and prevailed," that at the close of Mr. Bramwell's labors in this circuit, the number in society was doubled; without mentioning the multitude of those who were still under serious impressions, but had not united themselves in church fellowship, and others who were in that state of probation which is usually observed in the economy of Methodism, prior to their admission into all its privileges.

The following simple narrative, by Mr. Thomas Pearson, sen., of Gomersal, affords some farther details of this work of God in that village:—

"In the year 1793, at the commencement of the late war, a day was appointed by the government to be set apart for fasting and prayer; in consequence of which prayer meetings were held in our village. Religion was at that time at a very low ebb. The first meeting was held at our house in the morning. Many attended; and no sooner had we commenced the service than the power of God manifestly affected the assembly. I had been chosen a leader about four months before. We had only seven members in the class; and but five of them could be termed real members. Mr. Jackson was then in the circuit. The work gradually revived till conference; and our class increased to about twenty-seven.

"At this time Mr. Bramwell was appointed to labor among us. He had been the year before in Dewsbury, where God had abundantly owned his labors. He came to us full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. His powerful preaching and fervent prayers were so mighty through faith that the stoutest-hearted sinners trembled under him. Before that time

we had a partial outpouring; but a mighty shower then descended, and the truth and power of God wonderfully prevailed. My class soon increased to sixty members; and all ranks and degrees of men began to attend the preaching. Every place of worship in the neighborhood was crowded. Young persons only ten years of age were clearly awakened, and savingly converted. This had such an effect upon their parents that many of them also were awakened. The revival was esteemed by many to be extraordinary and singular: some thought the work was of God, and others that it was too enthusiastic. But it often happened when the persons who had imbibed the latter opinion went to hear for themselves, the divine power affected them, and they were constrained to cry aloud to God for mercy. Every man that held any office among us entered heartily into the work and performed his duty.

"When Mr. Bramwell preached at Gomersal, he generally remained all night at our house. As soon as dinner was over, it was his constant practice to pray in the family, and then to visit the neighbors from house to house. In this way he generally called on seventeen or eighteen different families before tea, and prayed in each of them with the utmost fervor. I was accustomed to invite a few of our friends, whose chief desire was to have their souls blessed, to take tea with Mr. Bramwell in the afternoon. Affectionate inquiry was then made into the state of each person's mind. They who had not received the blessing of justification were urged not to rest until they had obtained it; and they who were justified, not to rest until they were sanctified, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. After supper, he and I conversed some time about the affairs of the church at large; he then prayed and retired to rest. Although Mr. Bramwell was greatly fatigued with the work of the day, and, when at our house, went to bed late, generally about twelve o'clock, he always rose the next morning at five, and prayed for particular persons by name, and for every society throughout the circuit.

"I have been acquainted with many pious and holy persons, but one like Mr. Bramwell, for faith and prayer, I never beheld. While he continued with us the work went on progressively, and there was such an alteration throughout the circuit as was never before witnessed."

While Mr. Bramwell was attending the district meeting in Leeds, he accompanied Mr. John Nelson, one evening, to Kirkstall Forge, and preached out of doors to a large and attentive congregation. When the service was closed, a great part of the company retired into the chapel to hold a watch-night. The Spirit of God was poured out, and many were awakened. While at prayer, the next morning, a female in the family where he lodged, who had a great aversion against being converted in a noisy meeting, felt the power of God descend upon her; but endeavoring to stifle her convictions, she fell

down upon the floor, and remained four hours in a state of *apparent insensibility*, so that many said she was dead. However, on giving up her own will, and yielding to be saved in God's way, she revived, and was made happy.

During his residence in Birstal, many of those who had profitted under his ministry in Dewsbury called on him and consulted him as an old and well-tried friend. Indeed, all who had once proved the kindness and affection of his sympathizing spirit, accounted it a great advantage to unburden their minds in his presence. His counsel was not confined to spiritual things; but, when desired, he gave them the most judicious advice respecting their temporal affairs. On these occasions he always closed the interview by fervent prayer to God in behalf of the persons who were present, mentioning particularly the things about which he had been consulted, whether they related to the soul or the body.

Among others who often availed themselvs of this privilege, Mr. Thomas Jackson, who is a woollen-cloth manufacturer and a local preacher in the Dewsbury circut, observes:—

"One Tuesday morning, as I was going to Leeds market, I called upon Mr. Bramwell at Birstal. Our trade was at that time in a state of great depression. I had many goods on hand in the cloth hall, and was not able during many weeks to dispose of a single piece. I related these circumstances to Mr. Bramwell. Feeling much for my situation he said, *Thomas let us pray!* We knelt down together; and he prayed with such holy fervency, and such expressions of confidence in God, as I shall not soon forget. He spoke in faith, as if it had been actually revealed to him that my help was at hand. I set off from his house, and pursued my journey to Leeds, endeavoring all the way to believe what the man of God had uttered in prayer. My faith gained sthength by reflecting on the many gracious declarations which God had given in his word concerning his care for the bodies of his people, and his supply of their wants. I soon found him to be the God of providence as well as of grace: for I had not been more than a quarter of an hour at my stand in the cloth hall, before a merchant, with whom I had never before traded, came up to me and purchased all the goods which I had on hand. This answer to prayer proved to me, at that period, a most seasonable relief, and has encouraged me ever since to confide in the provident goodness of my heavenly Father.

"I know several extraordinary instances of answers to Mr. Bramwell's prayers. Take the following; One day when he was at our house a local preacher came in haste to request that he would instantly return with him, and pray with a gentleman who was then extremely ill, and apparently in the article of death, yet altogether unprepared for such an awful change. I united my pressing solicitations with those of the

messenger, to induce him to go; but, after all our reasoning and entreaties, we could not prevail. Seating himself in a thoughtful posture, he appeared for a short time to be in a state of mental abstraction. He then said, *Let us pray!* and kneeling down, he prayed in a most powerful manner. Among other strong expressions which he employed, he declared in all the confidence of faith, *O Lord! we believe thou wilt save the gentleman about whom we have been talking!* The local preacher retired; and, I own my surprise was great when a few days afterward I was told that the gentleman had very soon experinced the pardoning love of God, and had received a *blessed assurance of favor Divine.*"

Many of Mr. Bramwell's friends, in their intercourse with him, have remarked that he possessed a gift which nearly resemble "the discerning of spirits." His intimate communion, and close walk with God, entitled him to the appellation which was given to Abraham: "He was called the *friend of God.*" When the Lord was about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, he said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" It is not, therefore, at all wonderful, if men eminent for piety often find, in more senses than one, that "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Do not those affairs which are termed "common providential occurrences," speak in other language to them than to the rest of mankind? How much clearer then must be their apprehension of spiritual things, since it is peculiarly in these that "God manifests himself unto them, and not unto the world!" The nature of the communion which holy souls enjoy with God, and the terms of the close relation which subsists between him and them, are not at all times proper subjects of description. The promiscuous disclosure of them is often only "*casting pearls before swine.*" Those who attempt to explain such things most commonly display a profundity of mysticism, because they are tempted to travel wide of the record which the Scriptures give, and to employ phrases which are not congenial to the simplicity of the Gospel.

Some of the gifts which good men receive may be mentioned to edification, because they are "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Others are of a more particular, secret kind, and communicated only to chosen souls. They form no subject of instruction to other persons, but seem to be tokens of divine regard toward the individual themselves. "A stranger intermeddleth not with" the satisfaction which they convey. Of the latter description was the discernment of the spirits of men, which Mr. Bramwell at times appeared to possess. He was neither accustomed to speak of it in public, nor in the company of friends. Its effects have been frequently noticed; and, indeed, his occasional exercise of it in the presence of others, was the only method by which it ever became

visible. Mr. Thomas Jackson, the good man who is the narrator of the preceding anecdotes, gives the first of the following instances, and Mr. Stones, a zealous itinerant preacher, has comunicated the others: —

"A woman with whom I was well acquainted, and who had been a member of the Methodist society many years, came into our house one day, when Mr. Bramwell was with us. He looked earnestly at her, and said, 'Woman! you are a hypocrite! and if you do not repent and become converted, hell will be your everlasting portion! He then added, 'I know you will hate me for thus speaking the truth.' I was amazed at the abrubtness of his manner and the strong language in which he expressed himself; and not the less when I reflected on the person to whom all this had been said, because I entertained a high opinion of her religious character. But I was soon convinced of the truth of Mr. Bramwell's words; for the poor woman had departed self-condemned and humbled under a consciousness of her guilt. She sent for me late in the evening of the same day, and desired me to pray with her, as she felt herself in great distress of spirit. I found her calling to 'remembrance from whence she had fallen;' she was in a hopeful state of repentance, and desirous of 'doing the first works.' I therefore complied with her request, and poured out my soul before the throne of grace in earnest intercessions. In the course of a few hours, the Lord was pleased to manifest his mercy to her, and by 'his Spirit bore witness with her spirit that she was a child of God.' Her joy was excessive; and she has been often heard to declare, that if she had died in the state of mind in which Mr. Bramwell saw her, she must have been eternally lost."

"One day," says Mr. Stones, "as he and I were going together to visit the sick, we passed a public house, out of which came a man just as we had got beyond the door. When we had proceeded a little farther Mr. Bramwell groaned in spirit, The Lord have mercy on that man! Do you know who he is?' I replied, 'Yes, sir! Do you?' 'No,' said he, 'but this I know, that he is a perfect infidel.' 'Dear Mr. Bramwell!' said I, 'do not say so.' He replied, with increased emphasis, 'I am sure of it! He is a *perfect infidel!*' It is remarkable that this very man to my certain knowledge, was then, and for aught I know to the contrary, is still, such a character for infidelity and profaneness as perhaps has not his equal in all Yorkshire, if in the united kingdom.

"One night as I was preaching at Birstal, a man, who was a stranger to all present, either in pretence or reality fell ill, and had to be taken out of the chapel. The account which he afterward gave of himself was, that he came out of Lancashire, (from Leigh or its vicinity,) was in search of work, — had had nothing to eat for three or four days, &c. One of our friends took him home, and gave him a night's lodging. The next morning two of the friends came to me and expressed a de-

sire to beg something for the relief of the poor man. I immediately headed the subscription list with the small sum which I considered it my duty to give; and they went round the village to obtain what they could from others.

"In the mean time Mr. Bramwell came home out of the circuit. I related the whole affair to him. He wished greatly to see the man himself; and I went with him to the house where the man had lodged the preceding night. We found him within; for he was waiting to receive the money which the friends were collecting for him before he took his departure. The man very pathetically related his tale of wo to Mr. Bramwell. His account appeared to me to be quite rational, accurate, and ingenuous: it pierced to the bottom of my heart. While the man was rehearsing his troubles, Mr. Bramwell had his eyes closed, and frequently groaned in spirit. At length he lifted up his head and looked at the man with an eye that seemed to pierce him through, and said, 'Tell me! Is there not a bastard child in all this?' The man appeared to be thunderstruck; he began to tremble, faltered in his speech, and at length confessed that he had left home to avoid the payment to an illegitimate child which the law exacted. Mr. Bramwell very faithfully warned him of his sin and danger, and advised him to go home, desist from his evil practices, and turn to God with purpose of heart. The man expressing some reluctance about returning home, Mr. Bramwell threatened to have him taken up as an impostor if he did not leave the town immediately. We watched him out of the town, and were glad that he had gone away without his booty. Mr. B. afterward assured me that, to the best of his recollection, he had never seen the man before.

The revival of religion of which a very imperfect detail has been given in this chapter, was felt not only in Birstal, but in all the neighboring circuits. Many carnal persons, that had heard wonderful accounts about the individuals who, it was said, "had turned the world upside down," went to Birstal out of curiosity. Their going up was sanctified to numbers of them, who, on their return, could say "with a glad heart and free," "It is good for us to have been there!" They obtained pardon and peace, and "went down to their houses justified," and praising the God of their salvation.

But this great work was as remarkable for the quickening and purifying of believers, as for the awakening and "justifying of the ungodly." The mention of a "clean heart," had been, to several of their incredulous minds, a sound as of one that "brought certain strange things to their ears." They were, however inclined to go up in the character of spies; but many of them felt to their comfort that the place which they went to explore was nothing less than a land of Goshen. There they found "a feast of fat things full of marrow, and of wines on the lees refined." While they were led to pray, "Create in me a clean heart, and

renew a right spirit within me,"—the answer was given, "I will; be thou clean;" and they departed from that place glorifying God. Great was the multitude of those who at such seasons had joined themselves to the assmbly of the faithful, without indulging in any expcetation of obtaining a blessing.

But the humble souls who, in the simplicity of their hearts, had gone up "hungering and thirsting after righteousness, were not disapointed or *sent empty away*, but were *filled with the good things*, of the kingdom. These were as the days of "the Son of man;" and long will they be remembered. Many believers now living in the Leeds, Halifax, Bradford, and Huddersfield circuits, refer to that period as to the time of their espousals to Christ. The Holy Spirit wrought powerfully. Faith was in lively exercise, both in the preachers and the people. The weapons which they wielded were "not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." The shaking among the dry bones was wonderful; and before Mr. Bramwell left that circuit, such was the extraordinary influence of the Spirit, that while he prophesied to them, they stood up "a goodly multitude, complete." "The bones had come together, sinews and flesh had come upon them and the skin had covered them above; and the breath had come into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." "This was the Lord's doing; it was marvellous in the eyes of all." The characteristics of this work were so striking as to convince even the profane that it "was not of men, but of God." Very few mockers were found in that circuit. If there were any to whom the following words of St. Paul could apply, they were people who resided at a distance from these Divine operations, and who heard only exaggerated accounts of confusion and noise, and gave no credence to any of the good effects which happily resulted: to them, therefore, it might be said, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish! For I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

Amidst all the fervor of the revival it was Mr. Bramwell's constant cry, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto thy name be the glory!" The greatest fear he knew, was lest any of the instruments whom the Lord had honored, by employing them in that cause, should forget their own littleness, and, beginning to think too highly of themselves, should neglect to ascribe all the praise to God to whom it was entirely due. That sinful man should thus in the slightest degree encroach on the province of God, was an idea most revolting to his grateful spirit. He could not endure the bare contemplation of it; but in all the fervency of holy zeal, he bore his decided testimony against such a presumptuous infringement of the Divine rights, and denounced the man who could audaciously attempt to rob God of

his glory. In this way he was the happy instrument of preserving many unwary and aspiring souls from being dashed against the rocks of spiritual pride. How many have we seen, who, on other occasions than this, instead of esteeming it an act of unprecedented condescension in God to employ them in executing any of the saving purposes of his grace, have reversed the case, and fancying themselves to be persons o much consequence in the economy of salvation, have actually been brought to think, that by their trivial deeds, could render the Lord of hosts essential service! To the Messiah of God it appertains, and to him alone, to declare, "Mine arm brought salvation!" while with all humility of soul, it becomes the redeemed of every degree to confess, respecting themselves and others, "We got not the land in possession by our own sword, neither did our own arm save us; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance; because thou hadst a favor unto us."

He guarded with much jealousy against the rising of this proud feeling in himself; and he was equally anxious to hinder its prevalence in others. If he beheld it even in its budding, he was accustomed to exclaim against it, and to warn every man of its dangerous consequences. For he knew that such a spirit provoked most justly God's indignation and wrath, impeded the blessed work of salvation, destroyed all personal religion in the individuals by whom it was cherished, and brought on all the labors of a minister, "blasting, and mildew, and hail." Without doubt, it is comely and proper to rejoice when sinners are awakened and converted. Such happy occurrences must afford the highest gratification both to the minister whose labors have been honored with an issue so successful, and to all the faithful in Christ Jesus. For if there "be greater joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance," a similar expression of gladness *on earth* cannot be sinful. But one part of *his* employment who is "the accuser of the brethren" consists in an attempt to attack the unguarded human heart when it is elated with sacred pleasure, and to change this correct and heavenly feeling into a towering principle of arrogance. How needful, therefore amidst the most sacred delight, to "watch and pray that we enter not into temptation!" We may rejoice, but it ought to be "with trembling," on account of the frailty of our nature."

In all considerable revivals of religion, it has been the objection of worldly men and lukewarm Christians, that numbers "have fallen from their Christian steadfastness, and concerning faith have made shipwrek." This defection has been noticed in particular among youthful professors But was there ever known a fruitful soil into which the enemy did not attempt to introduce noxious weeds? And he can accomplish this purpose with the greatest secrecy and the best effect, by mixing his tares

with the wheat. Yet the charge, when it is applied to revivals in the Methodist societies, is not so well founded as many persons imagine.

For allow, that in the heat of a revival a youth depraved in his manners is converted. Being made happy by the removal of all condemnation from his mind, in generous ardor of pious feeling he wishes for all around him to possess the same blessings as those which he enjoys. To effect this, he begins to exhort the careless among his relations, companions, and neighbors, to escape everlasting punishment, by believing on the Lord Jesus. He becomes active in prayer meetings and Sunday schools, and in visiting sick people. His zeal, untempered by knowledge or experience, prompts him soon to engage with all his heart in several public devotional exercises. His religion, being a lively principle, does not permit him to indulge in a morbid stillness. Concede, likewise, that such a young person "having no root in himself, sometimes dureth but for awhile." Either his pride is hurt and his piety blasted, or understanding little about the sufficiency of divine grace and the stratagems of the devil, he is readily enticed from his high tower by "that wicked one," and suffers his love to decline, and his exertions to cease. The previous ardency of this youth's zeal for the glory of God is the cause why his fall is a matter of the greatest notority, and fills the mouth of unbelievers with expressions of triumph.

But let another youth, placid in his disposition and moral in his habits, unite himself with a sedate company of believing people, profess his faith in Christ, evince a change of heart by the fruits of a stricter life, and proceed in his Christian course rejoicing. These good people, having none of the appearance of religious ardor about them, are able, by the sole force of their own still example, to keep their young convert in his proper place, that is, as a learner. But should he yield to his former worldly spirit, dislike to act from righteous motives, absent himself from many of the divine ordinances, especially the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and retain very little even of the form of godliness, yet, as he had never made himself conspicuous in religious matters, and still continues occasionally to associate with the people of God, his fall is scarcely perceptible. By some of his religious friends, the change in his heart is call "a degree of colder feeling;" and those who view it with pain have often *sufficient liberality* to impute it only to "a temporary lukewarmness." During all this time, his outward moral conduct is faultless; and the men of the world, seeing scarcely any difference between the commencement, the carrying on, and the catastrophe of this work of grace, find in it no manner of reproach, and his fate excites no public animadversion. Yet his defection is as deep as that of the other, though the steps by which he descended are not so palpable and precipitous.

All persons, except those who oppose conjecture to experience, will

perceive that this difference is a correct one with regard to many of the individuals "who draw back to perdition," and that it applies as forcibly, in another respect, to whole communities. For it often happens, even in the Methodist connection, that a zealous, lively people, experience a great increase of members, while another society in the same circuit and at only a short distance, remains stationary. Some of the members of the latter are usually foremost in censoriousness, and mark with a scornful finger how many new converts among their zealous neighbors "have put their hands to the plough, and by looking back, have rendered themselves unfit for the kingdom of God." Such an unhappy occurrence ought to excite within a pious breast emotions of a different description. But these jaundiced animadverters, who see all things through a perverting medium, commonly forget to take any account of those awakened at the same time, "who still retain their integrity, and are going on to perfection." They never consider, that if all the members of their own body have not "left their first love," they in reality feel little of its animating power. They can calculate, with officious avidity, that the lively society has in twelve months lost more members than they have lost in twelve years: but they seldom venture to recollect that within the same number of *months*, the very people with whom they institute the comparison, have gained a greater number of hopeful members than their accusers have done in as many *years*. In a society, therefore, in which "the work of the Lord" remains in nearly a fixed state, the decrease in the number of its members will, in general, be very trifling; while in a neighboring society, though several may have "fallen from their steadfastness in Christ," yet the increase of stable members is often numerous in a tenfold proportion.

In these observations, the greatest allowance is made, as to the numbers of those who fall away; but on a strict scrutiny even into the smallest society in which a revival occurs, it will be generally discovered that Satan and his emissaries have magnified the apostates into four times their actual number. All boasting on the part of discreet members and grave societes being thus effectually excluded, would it not be a more Christian method to lay aside many of their unjust prejudices, and 'be willing for a season to rejoice in the light' which they might behold in others? Would not such a course be a great personal benefit to themselves, and bring them into a train for "catching the sacred flame?" If they cannot thus submit themselves, let them "be watchful and strenthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." The mind of man is too prone to substitute its own previous conceptions of the manner in which God ought to conduct his operations, for the method which he is pleased in his infinite wisdom actually to adopt. Naaman's spirit and address were perfectly *natural* when he said, "Behold I thought, he will surely come out to me. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damas-

cus, better than all the waters of Israel?" And the arguments of his servants were inspired by heaven: they said, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some *great thing*, wouldst thou not have done it?" Indeed, all God's plans are founded on the abasing of human pride, "that no flesh may glory in his presence." In the admirable process of his grace, "he hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

It would be wrong to close these reflections, without adverting to the case of some "who kept not their first estate" in grace. The provisions for catechumens in the Methodist societies are probably the best which could be devised by human wisdom under the influence of Divine teaching. Class meetings are real nurseries for all that is lovely and excellent in religion. But it sometimes happens, that they who are placed at the head of them are so occupied with other departments of the work of God as to forget to feed the lambs of the flock. This is especially the case during a revival. They are like some eager fishermen, who, in their haste to obtain a fresh draught, neglect to secure those fishes which they had previously caught. Other class leaders are competent to build up believers in their most holy faith; but have not discernment enough to instruct recent converts in "the first principles of the doctrine of Christ," without a knowledge of which all attempts to raise a Christian character must be fruitless. When a young Christian falls into hands like these, he is required, at too early a period of his novitiate, to bear his part in social prayer, instead of being exhorted to "attendance to reading." And at the time when he ought "to be swift to hear and slow to speak," his opinion is often asked about Church matters or religious doctrines, which should only engage the attention of more advanced disciples. It is in this way that the Bible becomes neglected, ignorance is engendered, and pride fostered. The youth, raw and inexperienced as he is, appears quite conscious that he has a capacity for every thing, and that "he has more understanding than all his teachers." He begins therefore to slight pious instruction; forms rash judgments about "things indifferent," and is not backward in giving them utterance. In the mean time, some good people can see nothing wrong in all this, but consider it a proof of "an independent spirit!" How much more consistent would it be in every Christian to inculcate and encourage "that mind which was also in Christ Jesus," and to which all his followers have this special invitation,—"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Such a yoke as this "it is good for a man to bear in his youth."

Though these observations apply with much propriety to some young

people who forsake the way of peace, yet in many instances they are no less true respecting elder persons, who find themselves placed in similar circumstances, after their reception into the fold of Christ. However advanced they may be in years, they are but "as new-born babes;" and from the fixed nature of their former habits, are as liable as younger people to have their "minds corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." It is not peculiar to any period of life for "the dog to turn to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." An injudicous course of instruction, and the baneful infection of froward examples, may cause aged persons to relapse as speedily as their juniors. With less "excuse for their sin," they can be more confident and dogmatical about many things that have no immediate reference to their salvation; and "having perverted their way," they are too apt "to forget the Lord their God."

Mr. Bramwell therefore never acted more in the character of "a wise master builder," than when he made careful provision for recent converts. By painful experience, he had known, in himself, the pernicious consequences which accrue from a want of early Christian tuition. After he had felt the first gracious visitation of the Holy Spirit, "no man cared for his soul." He had "stumbled about on the dark mountains" till at length he was favored with "the communion of saints." He was therefore well qualified to appreciate the value of Christian society and pious advice; and adopted measures in every place for insuring these benefits to all who were admitted within the pale of the Christian church. Directions were given to the most prudent and well informed class leaders, to take special charge of all who evinced a concern for their salvation. They were advised to encourage the timid and by all gentle methods, to prevent those who were only "girding on their harness, from boasting themselves as they that were putting it off." It was also his practice to meet the converts of each sex separately, to give them appropriate counsel respecting their conduct, point out proper books for their perusal, and to recommend, above all, the constant reading of the Scriptures, and a strict attention to personal religion and private devotion.

When he perceived them observant of these precepts, he invited their attention to the doctrinal works of Wesley and Fletcher. He disliked that wavering humor in religious opinions which some persons have thought fit to dignify with the high-sounding title of LIBERALITY. Knowing that superficial attainments in practical piety are too often caused by unsettled notions about religious truth, he introduced to their notice the immortal productions of those two great men, as a complete treasury of needful "erudition for a Christian man." Considering that system of doctrines to be in perfect agreement with the Scriptures of truth, and admirably adapted to the wants of man, he was induced to dilate

on their excellence at every fit opportunity. In this way, he labored not only to gain converts, but to form Christians and establish believers.

But after all his judicious precautions and laudable anxiety, he was sometimes called to mourn over miserable backsliders. It would have been most wonderful, if, in this respect, "the disciple had been above Christ, his Master," who had one Judas in his select company. Mr. Bramwell was too well acquainted with the constitution of human nature to be amazed at these unhappy occurrences, "as though some strange thing had happened unto him." His compassion was on such occasions powerfully excited, and he earnestly longed to "reclaim and bring these wanderers back." In this department of the work of God he was uncommonly successful. Several who "did once run well," heard this "son of consolation," and "in the strength of grace," were induced again to commence their Christian career. His addresses, full of effection, were instrumental in their restoration to the favour of God, which they had forfeited. On this account his memory will long be cherished by many, who, on this topic, "had heard him gladly," and who now adorn their Christian profession by blameless lives, and a holy conversation. He lived to see numbers of returning prodigals, and, in imitation of the paternal compassion of the God of heaven, he ran to meet them, gave them an affectionate welcome, and called on all around to the expression of gladness, because "those who had been dead were alive again; those who had been lost were found."

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Bramwell is stationed in the Sheffield circuit—A great revival in that town—His diligence in the work of the ministry—His acquirements and the manner in which they were applied—Reflections on the improvement of time—Anecdotes—Letters.

The conference in 1795 directed Mr. Bramwell to labor in the Sheffield circuit. He was quite unknown to the friends in that town. The reason of this appointment is explained in the following communication by Mr. Henry Longden:—

"Early in the year 1794, our reverend father in the Gospel, Mr. A. Mather, paid a pastoral visit to Sheffield. As he had been twice stationed in this circuit, he knew many pious individuals there, and felt for them an unceasing affection. He had recently visited several circuits in the north of England, where there was a revival of religion and a great increase in the societies; he had there caught the holy flame, and in every place endeavored with renewed ardor to spread its

influence.* In addressing the members of the Sheffield society, he told them 'that in all those places where the Lord had lately poured out his Spirit, it was in answer to earnest prayer. The preachers every where, after the usual services, held prayer meetings; all who could conveniently remain, united to implore a general blessing; and the Lord, who had inspired the desire, granted their requests: it was done according to their faith.' During this visit they had many refreshing seasons together.

"After his departure, Mr. Moon and Mr. Cooper continued to unite, in the same manner, with the people in public prayer. The good seed sown by Mr. Mather soon appeared. On the day of the following midsummer lovefeast, a shower of reviving, saving, and sanctifying grace descended, and the people were overwhelmed with its influence. A particular account of this great work is found in the London Methodist Magazine, vol. xviii page 415, written by Mr. Moon.

"In August, 1794, the conference appointed Mr. Blagburn as Mr. Cooper's successor, and in the following year three hundred and eighty souls were added to the church. These two blessed men were well calculated by their zeal to promote, and by their wisdom to defend this extraordinary work of the Spirit. The Sheffield people were anxious respecting a successor; and as the conference of 1795 approached, Mr. Mather was requested to recommend, and if possible to procure, 'a man after God's own heart;' one who had witnessed a similar effusion of the Holy Spirit. Mr. Bramwell was sent, an entire stranger to the people, in answer to prayer; and was every where received as an angel of God. The ground was prepared by his excellent predecessors 'to receive the good seed' in some places, and in others the fields were already white unto the harvest.'

"The people soon perceived Mr. Bramwell was a man come out from God: his words were accompanied with a Divine authority and a gracious unction. In several houses where he lodged, while in the country his prayers and intercessions were often heard many times during the night. He uniformly left his bed at four in the morning to enter upon the duties of the day; every moment of which was spent in union with God, and in dvotedness to the salvation of the people.

"Plenteously anointed with holy oil, he proclaimed the jubilee of the Gospel, the acceptable year of the Lord, the day of deliverance to all that believe. As his whole soul was employed in this work of preaching, so he required of his hearers their silent, fixed attention. Children might not disturb; the heart might not slumber, if observed; nor might the eye of an individual wander. When these important preliminaries

* See Mr. Mather's interesting account of the revival of religion at Hull, in the London Methodist Magazine, vol. xvii. p. 693.

of usefulness were secured, he directed the mind to wait only upon God as the great fountain of blessings, and to look to Christ as the only object of faith, 'that with meekness they might receive the ingrafted word, which is able to save the soul.'

"Every where he preached 'Christ as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' and faith as the great duty enjoined in the Gospel. He showed distinctly the proper subjects of saving faith, and that all such, and such only, as, in obedience to the command of God, attempt to believe, are enabled also to believe and receive instantly the answer of faith, the salvation of the soul; that salvation is wrought by the grace of God, through the exercise of faith; and that though salvation has unlimited degrees, it has two leading characters, viz. JUSTIFICATION and SANCTIFICATION: that as we cannot be justified from the guilt of past offences but by faith, so we are sanctified throughout by the exercise of the same faith: that the accomplishment of the promises by faith is always instantaneous; and that such a faith in powerful operation is to be distinguished from that which is a gracious habit of the mind; a faith wherein we stand, and walk, and overcome the world.

"These doctrines Mr. Bramwell urged in almost every sermon: yet he did not exalt them and depreciate others. For as Divine truth sweetly harmonizes when seen comprehensively, so he published every doctrine of the Gospel, bringing 'out of the treasury things new and old.' To say that he was popular every where, is saying very little. While he was engaged in the pulpit, sinners saw their natural face as in a glass and were deeply affected with a sight of their sinful deformity; professors beheld the awful difference between the form of godliness and the power; and the attention of saints was turned upon themselves as connected with their holy calling. The humble, the broken hearted, the thirsty for God, were encouraged now to believe in Christ as a present and all-sufficient Saviour. 'The hand of the Lord was with his servant, and many believed and turned to the Lord.' Under his awakening appeals untold numbers have trembled; the veil of ignorance and the mask of hypocrisy were torn away, when the real characters were shown in the light of the Gospel. Under his persuasive ministry many a Lydia's heart was opened, many a bowed spirit transported, and 'shared in the gladness of all that believe.'

"In promoting the work of the Lord, Mr. Bramwell employed the talents of the local preachers, leaders, and other individuals, in prayer; and they became important helpers to him in every place. The embers of love were kindled all around: and when he revisited the societies, he found them 'striving together for the furtherance of the Gospel. Opposition was broken down, lukewarmness was destroyed, a holy union was maintained, and the work of God, in the town and country broke out in a flame of life, and power, and zeal. Itinerant and local preach-

ers, with others, have come more than fifty miles in search of the blessing of a clean heart; and joining with him in the holy violence of prayer, have returned, glorifying God for the wonders of his saving power. Wherever he went, visible signs and wonders were wrought in the name of Christ: and in the course of the first year, twelve hundred and fifty members were added to the society! He and his fellow laborers ceased not to remind the class leaders of their responsibility in feeding and guiding the 'Church of God which he had purchased with his own blood,' and that they ought to make up the lack of the preachers' service tward all those who were but newly found in Christ.

"As an overseer of souls, he frequently visited eight or ten families in the early part of the day. These visits were short and spiritual. If possible, he would have the whole family collected, and having ascertained the religious state of them all, he would pray for each by name, and implore blessings suited to their respective necessities. We have often felt on these occasions the influence of his affectionate solicitude, his penetrating look, and his pointed inquiries; and believe it was in vain for the formalist, the backslider, and the hypocrite, to elude detection by him. The rich and the poor were admoished, growing evils in families destroyed in the bud; parents, children, and servants taught their proper duty; and all were constrained to assert, respecting our reverend friend, 'in labors he was more abundant.'

"When a minister so fully discharos his pastoral office among a numerous people, he is in danger of neglecting the diligent study of the Scriptures, and of making a superficial preparation for the pulpit. Mr. Bramwell, however, was not content to read the inspired volume in his vernacular tongue; but he diligently studied it in the language in which it was written. He manifested no laxness, but evinced that every discourse was the result of much labor. We know that he weighed human opinions contained in commentaries; but he sought for the divine teaching in all things. And, without controversy, he was an able workman who needed not to be ashamed. The style of his composition was peculiarly his own. We do not know that he had any model set before him. His sentences were generally short and terse, containing much point, calculated to convey instruction and conviction directly to the mind. Sometimes there was a natural and beautiful abruptness elicited from the workings of his soul, which was burdened with the sacred message from God to the people. This has operated as a two-edged sword, penetrating to the center, and dividing the joints and marrow. He was acquainted with the workings of the heart and the devces of Satan, and studied mankind in *man* as well as in *books*, witnessing in society all its variety of circumstances and fluctuations. This only can account for adaptation of his sermons to every congregation, and every public or calamitous event; for he 'rightly divided the word of truth, and gave to each a portion in season.'

"Mr. Bramwell delighted to press the people to believe, but he did not omit to inculcate the weighty matters of the law. He recommended a punctual attendance upon the public means of grace, but he would not have any duty neglected at home. He insisted upon the necessity of private prayer, but he would not infringe upon the work of searching the Scriptures. He considered the religion of Christ as an empty name when it was destitute of love; that perfect, powerful and operative principle, which leads to acts of universal good will to man. He proclaimed, 'Owe no man any thing but love.'

"When we inquire respecting the cause of the almost unparalleled fruits of his labors, we find that truth must be clearly perceived before it can be represented with clearness to others; that it must be felt in the heart of the speaker, before it can impress the heart and arouse the conscience of the hearer. And thus it was: Mr. Bramwell was not only earnest *externally*, but he was *inwardly* and powerfully impressed with the importance of rightly explaining the doctrines and enforcing the precepts of Christ to dying, perishing men, and labored to be 'clear of the blood of all men.'

"Mr. Bramwell was himself the example of all he recommended. The more intimately his private habits of life were known, the more he was esteemed and venerated. Those who were thus favored, breathed, in his society, a heavenly atmosphere, and acknowledged a peculiar influence to accompany all his conversation. They admired the correctness of his principles of action, which were conformed to the precepts of the Gospel: they saw that 'in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had his conversation in the world, and more abundantly toward them.'

"He saw the possibility that, 'after having preached to others, himself might become a castaway.' By stated fasting, by constant watchfulness, by habitual temperance, in all things, he kept the body in subjection, and thereby increased his spirituality and power.

"In nothing did he approach more nearly to an imitation of our Lord, than in his benevolence. It cannot be thought singular that he was courteous, and kind; for all the ministers of the Gospel ought to exemplify these virtues. But he relieved the necessities of others, by making frequent sacrifices of his own personal comfort. We have known him give his only top coat in severe weather to one who had not a coat; nor would he spare the garments of his beloved wife for the relief of persons in extreme distress. On another occasion, while visiting a sick man, who was in extreme want, and lying in bed without a shirt, Mr. Bramwell retired into a private room, took off his own shirt, and gave it to the poor man. He was indeed a good Samaritan; he considered every child of Adam as his brother or his sister, as flesh, and bone of his bone, whom Christ had loved unto death; and therefore having

a claim for his utmost efficient help. When there was any doubt in the case of applicants he would ascertain the reality and extent of suffering by personal investigation, and has administered to their wants, property, food, or medicine, with his counsel, sympathy, and prayers. Often has he been 'help in need,' a ministering angel of mercy both to the afflicted body, the broken spirit, and the despairing mind. When, therefore, he enforced the most difficult and least palatable duties of religion, the people did not inwardly respond, 'Physician, heal thyself.'

"'Thus by the space of three years he ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears, and to teach every man, that he might present every man perfect before God.'"

Another valuable correspondent gives the subjoined account of those glorious days!

"When Mr. Bramwell was announced as the preacher appointed for Sheffield, there was a degree of expectation excited in the society, that the Lord would come and revive the work of Divine grace by his instrumentality. Mrs. Cooper had been very useful in the conversion of many individuals, and had provoked a spirit of prayer and exertion that had been blessed of God. Of the number of those that had been brought to God, was Mr. Edward Miller, and a few others, who seemed prepared to enter into a revival, and to second it with all their powers. Mr. Bramwell was no sooner heard than the genuine power was experienced. A kind of electric sensation was felt in the whole society. Present effects were looked for, and present effects were received. The clearness of justification and sanctification were decidedly and constantly preached. A *present enjoyment* of both of them was so ardently pressed, so unceasingly offered by faith, and faith alone, to be received, felt, and enjoyed *now*, — that the whole circuit seemed soon to catch the flame. Seventeen hundred persons, in the two years, were joined to the society. Entire sanctification was pressed upon believers as their undoubted right. They were constantly pressed into the enjoyment of it, and numbers professed to enter into the possession of that state, and brought forth all its precious fruit.

"From various parts of England people arrived to judge of the truth of this work. Many were strongly opposed to the mode in which it was carried on, and violently objected to it; but they were so overcome by the spirit of the laborers and the effect of the revival, that they repeatedly acknowledged their full conviction of its being a genuine and undoubted work of the Spirit of God.

"Mr. Bramwell's labors were abundant. Possessed of a strong body and a powerful voice, he never seemed to be exhausted; but unwearied in his work, he gave consistency and stability to the whole.

"At length a division took place in the society, and 'separated very friends.' Spirits the most united no longer associated together; and in-

dividuals who had formerly been as brethren, viewed the acts of each other with aversion.

"How must the lovers of Zion lament, that in every revival of God's work, there are certain evils intermixed, that seem to say, 'Thus far shall you go, and no farther!' Well! the time will come, when godliness in its power will prevail, when Jew and Gentile will unite, when the omnipotence of Jesus will win or blast all his enemies, when he shall establish his kingdom, give victory to his saints, and reign over all for ever and for ever! 'Amen! Amen! so come, Lord Jesus!' is the hope and cry of every true believer.

"One of the most constant effects of Mr. Bramwell's residence in any place, was 'the spirit of prayer.' Such a general spirit of zealous prayer as he encouraged, was never experienced before in Methodism. Strong desires for the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, for the destruction of sin, for the advancement of Holiness, and for the glory of the latter days, were felt and breathed out by numbers. They were answered by the Spirit of God, diffusing his own blessing and sealing the truth by his own power, so that the most sanguine hopes were entertained by the faithful, that great and glorious consequences would be produced, and would extend through the Christian and Heathen world. If these effects have not been so generally felt and so widely spread as some expected,—yet blessed have been the consequences: justification and sanctification by faith only, have been preached and experienced to be the truth of God by the Spirit's divine application, 'sealing the believer to the day of redemption,' and witnessing with his own divine testimony to the truth.

"Mr. Bramwell preached *a present and a full salvation* through faith in the Redeemer's blood; and thousands will have to praise God in eternity that ever they heard from his lips the sound of such a Gospel. On the entire destruction of sin and the complete renewal of the heart in holiness, he preached decidedly: this was his constant, his favorite theme. To be cleansed from all sin, to be perfected in love, was the grand object of his preaching, and the constant experience of his heart. Never did he preach with more energy, never did a greater divine unction attend his word, than when he pressed the Christian, the Methodist doctrine, of entire sanctification from all sin, the utter destruction of all inbred evil, and the restoration of the whole soul to the image of God! In this Mr. Bramwell was faithful to God and to the Scriptures, and showed all good fidelity to the souls over whom he watched, and whom he wished to present perfect before God, and cleansed from all unrighteousness? The author of this account knew that Mr. Bramwell held this sentiment and felt this experience for twenty-three years before he died; and he believes that he was never conscious of enjoying it more sensibly, and never expressed himself on this subject more clearly, than a few days before he expired.

"A select band that met early in the morning, once a week, consisting of Messrs. Longden, Miller, Wilkinson, Levick, and the itinerant preachers, was made an uncommon blessing. In that meeting the public and private conduct of every individual passed through a fiery ordeal. Their holiness in private, and their spirit and carriage in public were severely and faithfully scrutinized. They were guarded equally against intemperate, unchristian zeal, and against lukewarm formality. Their whole conduct underwent a severe examination, while they were excited to the most zealous exertion, and cautioned against any excess which could not be warranted by the word of God.

"The attempts of the enemy to defile the purity of the work, by bringing forward improper characters, mixing false fire with the true flame, or by disparaging the work in any other way, were most assiduously prevented. His stratagems were perceived, and his designs defeated. Never, perhaps, was there a work that could better withstand the opposition of the wicked, or calm the apprehensive fears of the faithful, than the revival at Sheffield. If its fruits were not spread through the world, we can only say the time is not yet come, when righteousness shall fill the globe, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth. But these lively specimens animate the true believer; they give a degree of assurance to his hopes; they afford a ground of dependance on the truth of almighty God; and virtually announce, that 'the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of Christ,' and that he shall forever reign with his saints."

In the preceding extract, the reader will have noticed the slight allusion made to Mr, Killham's secession from the parent connection. Mr. Bramwell's feelings on that occasion have been variously represented. But the best mode of forming a judgment of man, is to hear how he unbosoms himself to his intimate friends. On this subject Mr. Bramwell's views will be correctly ascertained by his expressions at the close of the following letter. Unlike many warm souls at that period, "he lived above the division, and waited the event in peace." As a Christian minister, he accounted it indecorous in him to "speak evil of any man." This letter, being the first of the series which is intended to be inserted in this work, is printed according to Mr. Bramwell's own method of punctuation. It will be perceived that he delighted in the frequent use of the dash, and employed it on all occasions.

LETTER I.

To Doctor Taft.

Sheffield, November 1st, 1797.

"My Dear Brother,—I should have written to you immediately, but expected Messrs. Miller and Wilkinson would have come to see

you, as I had a promise from them. They are prevented at present by business. I rejoice in your union and prosperity. I bless the Lord for his goodness to the little flock. He cares for you—and will help you. —I trust your own soul prospers more and more.—There is a work for every day.—The Lord waits to impart more of his love, and will give more to the hungry.—O my brother Taft! give yourself to him in much prayer and faith, keep yourself as much as possible composed—let not little things dissipate your thoughts.—Be fixed in God. The world will tempt and seek to draw you;—but your work is for God—for heaven—for glory.—O run the race! fight the battle! conquer through the blood I believe you will receive the crown. If you are not called to preach—or exhort—or teach, you are called to live—to pray—to walk with God. —Fear not!—salvation will come!—Wait for all he has to give—

Wait to prove his utmost will,
And have your heaven about you still.

"I am seeking the Lord every day. I am sure I grow in grace.—This is my labor—to see God—and to love him.—My union is stronger than when I was with you.—I have left all in his hands.—I have no care but to please him.—'I am dead—and my life is hid with Christ in God.' —I am more dependent than ever,—see myself more and more—and can only say, 'Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'—O the mind, the sweet mind of Christ! May I follow the Lord every moment!—I see the work deepen among his people; and for some weeks have seen souls saved nearly every day, less or more.

"I live above the division—and wait the event in peace. The will of God be done—not mine! When all are humbled—we, I trust, shall shake hands and all give glory to God. I feel much compassion—my bowels yearn for all men—and I can speak evil of none.—

"I am your affectionate brother in Christ,

"Wm. Bramwell."

These are the expressions of a mind filled with charity, and desirous of peace. They display Mr Bramwell's amiable character to advantage. He "felt much compassion," and his "bowels yearned for all men," even for those who had separated from communion with him. Some of his more zealous friends, who manifested much displeasure on this occasion, expected him to be as warm as themselves. But he remembered, that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil."

Mr. Bramwell's zeal for the Lord of hosts, his utter indifference to mere secular concerns, and his well-tried prudence, engaged the affec-

tions of the people, and caused the conference of 1797 to honor him by a third year's appointment. His colleagues were Mr. James Wood and Mr. Pipe, men who enjoyed his confidence, and with whom he became very closely united. Under their skilful administation the society was kept in a state of comparative tranquillity, amidst much outward perplexity and many incentives to disquietude. The work of conversion and sanctification did not cease; but the walls of Jerusalem continued to be built, even in those troublous times.

Mr. George Smith was that year stationed at Ashby de la Zouch, and heard wonderful things about the revival at Sheffield. Having been long in search of the blessing of sanctification, he resolved to go to the place where it was reported many others had received it. He accordingly set out for Sheffield in company with Messrs. Crawson, Shakespeare, and Keecher. They arrived early on Saturday, and repaired in the evening to the band meeting, in Norfolk-street chapel. Messrs. Bramwell, Pipe, Longden, and Miller, were present: and while they and other able witnesses gave a clear and Scriptural account of the manner in which they received the gift of sanctification, the strangers (Mr. George Smith, and his friends,) were much affected. Mr. Miller perceived it; and going up to Mr. Smith, inquired who he was. When he had been told, he said, "Here is a travelling preacher, who is come to Sheffield, and has brought three of his friends with him, above seventy miles, for the purpose of receiving 'a clean heart.'" He exhorted all the faithful to lift up their hearts in behalf of these earnest and sincere seekers. They began to pray for them; when Mr. Smith was so overwhelmed with the power of the HIGHEST, as instantly to "enter into the sanctifying rest, which remains for the people of God." He then adopted the advice which our Lord gave on a different occasion to Peter—"And thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." He united in prayer for those whom he had brought with him; and while in the act of entreating "the very God of peace to sanctify them wholly," and that their whole spirit, and soul, and body, might be perserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord spake the word, and they were made partakers of the blessing. "Being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, they were enabled to perfect holiness in the fear of God." On returning homeward, "their hearts burned within them while they talked" of this great salvation. Two of them (Messrs. Shakespeare and Crawson,) died in the following year, enjoying all the glorious fruits of this sanctification. The other two are yet living, "and stand fast in the same liberty wherewith Christ had made them free."

Mr. Parker, of Woodhouse Grove, makes the following remarks on Mr. Barmwell's character and conduct:—

"My acquaintance with Mr. Bramwell was occasined by my removal,

about May, 1798, to Sheffield, where he had then been above two years stationed. At that time there was a remarkable revival, of the extent of which some judgment may be formed when it is observed, that at a single love-feast about one hundred persons were convinced of the necessity of 'working out their own salvation with fear and trembling.' During the continuance of this extraordinary enlargement of the work of grace, Mr. Bramwell's instrumentality was so singularly blessed of Him whose peculiar province it is to give the increase, that I cannot deem it irrelevant to enlarge on a topic that proved to be highly interesting and profitable to thousands, and in which Bramwell himself was eminently concerned. In addition to many others, among whom are two persons since called to the itinerant ministry, I was myself an eye and ear witness of those glorious seasons which will remain deeply imprinted on my recollection to the latest period of my existence. We might on this subject truly say, 'That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, declare we unto you.'—Certainly if ever I knew or experienced pentecostal seasons, those gracious and abundant manifestations of the Spirit which no language can describe, it was at this time, when, if not thousands, at least hundreds were added to the Church; many of them, I doubt not, such as shall be eternally saved. The arrows of conviction fastened on many; conscience did its office; the sword of the Spirit pierced 'between the joints and the harness;' Gallios became serious: and before the presence of Jehovah the stout hearted bowed the stubborn knee, and rocks of impenitence flowed into streams of penitential sorrow.

"The angels of God, we are informed, rejoice over one sinner that repenteth; but here they had to rejoice over hundreds. And they were assuredly there, rejoicing in our midst. Many beside myself will never forget the day when that hymn was sung at Garden-street chapel which begins with

> Angels now are hovering o'er us,
> Unperceived they mix the throng, &c.

For if ever I was conscious, as far as a human spirit can be, of the presence of supernatural powers, that was the time. Many felt and possessed unutterable things. It seemed that there was but a thin veil between us and the invisible world, and that Satan, for a season, was bound in chains, and the Church militant admitted into the presence chamber of the Majesty on high. The strong holds of Satan fell, like Dagon before the ark. Many were pressing through the strait gate into the kindom which is 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' And it was as though angels themselves attended to write the names of believers in the Lamb's book of life. But whether angels were there or not, of one thing I am persuaded, that heaven was there; for

'My Jesus to know,
An feel his blood flow,
'Tis life everlasting, 'tis heaven below.'

"How often was the large floor of the Norfolk-street chapel to be seen clustered over with little groups around a wrestling Jacob! and when he halted a little on his thigh, how ready were many to administer the word of consolation, how ready to join in prayer that shook the pillars of hell, and opened the gates of heaven!

"That Mr. Bramwell was in an eminent degree a man of prayer, I have been frequently assured by my own personal observation. Seldom have I called upon him, but it was easy to perceive, from the devotion which he breathed, and the heavenly mindedness which marked his manner and conversation, that 'he had been with Jesus.

"It has been my lot to mark Mr. Bramwell's very exemplary conduct in the social circle. And in this respect, I must affirm that I never met with his equal. His conversation was eminently such as 'tended to minister grace to his hearers.' It was his aim, in company, to direct his conversation and that of his friends to one point,—and that was a PRESENT and a FULL salvation. Throughout the whole, he maintained the most jealous and vigilant eye lest the discourse should in the least diverge toward topics not equally definite and important. Nor was he contented with this: it was not long before this man of God, and the company with whom he was engaged, fell on their knees and wrestled in prayer, till

'The op'ning heavens around them shone
With beams of sacred bliss.'

"One particular instance of this I will here relate: In consequence of being at the London conference in 1804, I frequently met with Mr. Bramwell. On one occasion, he desired me to meet him in the afternoon, at a friend's house in the city. On entering the house, the voice of devotion saluted my ear. Mr. Bramwell and the rest of his friends engaged successively in fervent social prayer. At tea, he ruled the conversation, that not a sentence concerning politics, the common topics of the day, the foibles of the neighborhood, or any indifferent subject was permitted to transpire. The attention of the company was directed exclusivly to the great concerns of their present and eternal salvation. It was not long before a person present advanced something irrelevant to the single aim which this man of God held so tenaciously in view; but he suppressed it immediately by exclaiming, 'Now we are wandering from the point again!' After conversation on the best subjects had continued for some time, the company again joined in fervent prayer until the preaching hour arrived, and importunately pleaded for the realization of the great blessings which had occupied their attention.

"I am particular about the mention of this trait in Mr. Bramwell, because, in common with many who profess the influence of the fear and love of God, I have experinced great difficulty in ordering a conversation aright, so that each person might be enabled to say, at the close of an interview, that he had imbibed a greater aversion to sin, and a more ardent thirst after holiness. When this is not the result, have we not reason to fear that either we, or the persons with whom we have conversed, are in some degree fallen from our first love, from the life, the pleasures of godliness? It is truly lamentable to notice the great degeneracy that prevails in the conversation of those who are only *nominally* religious in the present day. Some are content to while away every golden hour with subjects of a mere worldly nature. Some have outridden every profitable purpose to which the legitimate use of anecdotes can be applied, and haul in a number of tales of a facetious or ludicrous nature, the only end of which is to excite merriment and levity. These are far worse than the 'old wives' fables' against which St. Paul warns Timothy. But, says Cowper,

'Tis pitiful to court a grin,
When you should woo a soul.'

"Those who go about to destroy the souls of others and their own, by their rage for telling anecdotes, do not generally let the bare recital suffice. To secure their pitiful and ignoble end, and to give *effect* to their stories, they do not hesitate to give what is called 'a little additional coloring;' and in this way both truth and modesty are too often sacrificed. The politeness of the hearer obliges him to digest the lies an indelicacies at which his sober judgment recoils; 'while demons laugh unseen, at fools that ape the faults of humankind.' In the hearing of such persons a serious subject can scarcely be mentioned, but with impertinent levity they endeavor to turn it into ridicule. This the world calls 'wit;' and the miserable buffoon who utters it passes for 'an agreeable companion.' But does not such an unhappy qualification prove him to be one of the agents of the nither region, a bird of the way side to pluck up the tender seed out of the hearts of the sincere and simple, and a tool of Satan to efface every good impression?

"Christianity, be it observed, does not exclude cheerfulness. Christian cheerfulness consists in that serene and tranquil peace, that hope blooming full of immortality, that sacred joy in the Holy Ghost, which

'Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven.'

"I may be censured for this long digression from the history of Mr. Bramwell. But it appears to me, that the most advantageous purpose achieved by the biographic page, is that of pointing out in what respects the works of good men may be said to follow them with profit to sur-

vivors. Perhaps one of the most lively and impressive comments, that we can possibly receive from man on that prescriptive code, the Bible, is the illustration of its doctrines, the fulfilment of its promises, and the exemplification of its obligations, as displayed either in the living characters, or by the biographic record. Considered in this light, my digression may, I think, be justified.

"I shall beg leave here to mention a circumstance which occurred in Sheffield, and which is consistent with this feature in Mr. Bramwell's character. In consequence of certain persons in the principal street exhibiting at their shop windows prints and caricatures, many of which were of a ludicrous or an indelicate description, Mr. Bramwell warned his congregations of the evil and impropriety of allowing the mind to be diverted or corrupted by imagery of this kind. He blamed serious persons for stopping a moment to view such prints; and told them, that when he found a print of this sort hung up in a friend's house, he did not forget to give him a suitable reproof by turning the front of it to the wall.*

"The life and zeal which shone in Mr. Bramwell, kept him at the utmost distance from formality. Instead of being content during Divine service with the ordinary routine of singing and praying once before and once after the sermon; after having prayed at the close of preaching, he usually called on two or three persons to unite with him in supplication. At other times, while he was yet on his knees and in the midst of his prayer, he would break fourth into singing, in which he was immediately joined by the congregation. To me it appeared singularly solemn to see a whole congregation and their preacher singing in that suppliant posture. By such methods as these, the resolutions and impression produced by the sermon were rendered, in many cases, much more effectual.

"From these several circumstances, therefore, we cannot wonder that

* I cannot omit to relate a custom which I have ever admired in the late Bible Christian, the Rev. Mr. Rutherford. The daughters of that pious minister had from time to time wrought in needlework a variety of very important and apposite texts of Scripture, illustrative of its leading doctrines. Except two or three portraits of pious men, these were the only pictures that ornamented the walls of his dwelling. Whenever a stranger was admitted, or kept a few moments in waiting till Mr. R. could attend to him, there was scarcely a point of the parlor wall that did not preach to him a wholesome Biblical lecture. I once turned for a moment to one of these silent monitors, and read, "Lean not to thine own understanding; but in all thy ways acknowledge HIM, and HE shall direct thy paths." This truth has, more or less, followed me ever since. I have found in it the cause of many of the mistakes which I have made in life, and the rule by observing which I might have avoided a thousand sorrows.

it pleased the great Head of the Church to crown Mr. Bramwell's ministry with an abundant blessing. The writer of these lines is specially entitled to indulge in this sentiment: for, after a season of the deepest sorrow, as Mr. Bramwell was preaching at Norfolk-street chapel, the Lord was pleased to whisper peace to him who makes this communication. From that time the 'powers of the world to come' shown brighter, till he was enabled to witness, with full assurance, yea if needful, before assembled words, that he 'had not followed cunningly devised fables.' He could then 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' But he was not a solitary instance; for it was then by no means uncommon for those who had been present at such seasons of refreshment, to return home with the joyful tidings that many were born in Zion, without being able accurately to number those who were brought into that glorious liberty. While some were able to witness, by the Spirit of adoption, crying, '*Abba Father!*' that God for Christ's sake had blotted out as a thick cloud their transgressions, others were constrained to testify that God had not only 'power on earth to forgive sins,' but to 'cleanse them from all unrighteousness,' and to make them 'meet for an inheritance with the saints in light.'"

His respected colleague, Mr. Pipe, bears the following testimony to his piety and usefulness:—

"In 1795 my lot was cast in the Bradford circuit, Yorkshire: and Mr. Bramwell having been stationed the two preceeding years in the adjoining circuit, I had frequent opportunities of hearing the experience of those who had been benefitted by his ministry. His zealous endeavors to promote a spirit of piety among the different societies, his powerful praying and wrestling with God early and late, and his invariable aim to induce believers to 'perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord,' caused him to be greatly noticed, and drew many to hear him from the neighbouring circuits. These caught the flame; and prayer meetings and watch-nights were more strictly observed, and the work of God prospered in many places.

"Thus was he blessed to many in those parts of Yorkshire; but much more so afterward in the Sheffield circuit. The Lord had greatly refreshed his heritage, before he had received that appointment; but it might be said of him, as of Barnabas, that 'when he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord; for he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith; for he helped them much which had believed through Grace.'"

The pious and composed state of his mind, during this great work of God, is clearly shown in the subjoined letters:—

LETTER II.

To Mr. George Marsden.

"Sheffield, 1795.

* * * * *

"The Lord has begun to work among you. I pray that nothing may hinder. Go on your way using every prudent means. Speak evil of no man; neither be discouraged by any. Preach a present salvation, and pray for present blessings; the Lord always prospered this plan. Preach sanctification as a blessing *now* to be received by faith.

"On the day appointed for thanksgiving, the work broke out here in our chapel, at the evening meeting. Many souls had been previously set at liberty in the classes, and at the prayer meetings; but on that night there was a general outpouring of the Spirit. We desired all in distress to come into the vestry, when eight souls were delivered from the bondage of sin. Eight more received pardon on the Sunday. Monday was our love-feast; and near the close of it the power of God came upon us. We concluded at the usual time, but begged of all in distress to stay, and before eight o'clock it appeared to many good men, that more than twenty souls were delivered: the work has gone forward every day since, less or more. In two classes more than twenty experienced salvation. I have had clear evidence, and, to speak within bounds, I am persuaded of more than one hundred persons having found liberty in three weeks. O pray for us that nothing may hinder! The Lord be with us all in this great work!"

In another letter he refers to the society in Liverpool, and says:—

"My prayer is, that you may yet see much greater things before you leave them! May that precious society revive and increase with the increase of God! The salvation of souls is the glory of the ministry. Shall we see the glory spread, or depart? May we hope for the former! and in our little way be willing to die, to see the life! The kingdom will yet come, but, I am led to believe, *not in my time*. However I know I am drinking much deeper into its spirit; and, in praying without ceasing I shall receive the fulness of God. I am more than ever ashamed of unbelief. O how it dishonors God and his truth! All is ours, and we shall receive all."

In a third letter he says:—

"I have always union with God. I feel nothing but pure love in the greatest afflictions. I am often powerfully tempted, and sometimes heavy;—this was in our Lord. I feel I am going on. I have a continual opening between God and my soul, in prayer, love, and gratitude. I have a constant heaven in dependence upon the Lord. I feel weaker than ever, and God my all. Amen!"

LETTER III.

To Mr. Hargreaves.

"Sheffield June 30, 1796.

"DEAR BROTHER,

* * * * *

"A good work is still going on here, and many precious souls receive salvation. I am very desirous of more of the image of God, and do find some little increase. I often think of the example of St. Paul, but more of Jesus Christ. I believe it is our place to walk as he walked. I see that the world is in a miserable state; none truly at peace but they who leave all and follow him. Christ hath done all in point of merit,—but we must 'ask and receive, that our joy may be full.' I see more than ever that those who are given up to God in continual prayer, are men of business both for earth and heaven: they go through the world with composure, are resigned to every cross, and make the greatest glory of the greatest cross. On the other hand, if not given up to God in prayer every cross brings the greatest perplexity, and robs them of the little love and patience they enjoy. To be all alive to God is, as it were, two heavens; to be unstable, and not a *whole* Christian, is two hells. O, my brother, I hope you and your house will serve the Lord! I would advise you to consider the great privilege of the Gospel; and even beg, yea, beg with tears, that your house may be consecrated to God through the preaching of the word and much prayer, and by having God's servants under your roof. Remember the house of 'Obededom.' I am your effectionate brother. WM. BRAMWELL."

A respected friend has kindly transmitted the subjoined account:

"Mr. Bramwell's method of preaching had considerable variety in it. Though he accounted it the alpha and omega of his ministry to alarm sinners in the midst of their carnal security and 'to instruct believers in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect,' (and in each of these momentous departments he was equally excellent,) yet, in carrying his intentions into effect, he often introduced some agreeable mode of illustration, especially among the poor people in country places.

"I remember to have heard him preach an excellent sermon from Micah iv. 13, 'Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion! For I will make thine horn iron and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.' In an easy and familiar style he explained his text, by informing the good people, that corn was threshed out among the oriental nations, by means of oxen or horses, which were driven round an area, filled with loose sheaves, and by their continued trampling the corn was separated from the straw.

That this might be done the more effectually, the text promised an addition to the natural horny substance on the feet of these animals, by 'making their horn iron and their hoofs brass.' 'In this way,' he said, 'corn is not threshed in England; but it is among us usually beaten out by a flail; and as I am preaching to Englishmen, I conceive that I am doing no injury to the sentiments of my text by changing a few of the terms into those which are to you the most familiar.' He then showed how the whole portrayed Gospel times; and that, though in a more restricted sense it applied to ministers of the Gospel, yet it had a direct reference to the duty of ALL GOD'S PEOPLE, who were commanded to 'arise and thresh,' and whose privilege it was to come to HIM that alone was able to qualify them for their labor. In 'making their horn iron, and their hoofs brass,' the Lord was desirous of imparting stability and perpetuity to his own divine work, by granting supernatural aid to the faithful, that they might perform for him those services to which their own feeble and unassisted powers were totally inadequate. 'Beside,' he added, 'it is encouraging for the saints to know that they are provided with weapons both offensive and defensive. The threshing instrument is of the former description; it is of the same quality as that which is said to be "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil: and this is one of the weapons which he employs, in the hands of his people, to carry his gracious designs into execution. With this, it is promised, they "shall beat in pieces many people."'

"In the course of his sermon, he related, in the metaphorical style which his text sanctioned, many remarkable instances of the successful operation of the Gospel flail. 'A few days ago,' said he, 'a zealous man, small of stature, went to a neighboring town,* and, in a most loving spirit, with this implement, began to thresh an assembly of ungodly men. When he had finished his work, it was found that he had threshed the devil out of more than forty persons. And with the help of God, I am resolved, O sinner, to try what effects the smart strokes of this threshing instrument will produce on thy unhumbled soul!'

"He proceeded to exhort his hearers with considerable ability, to assail sin wherever it appeared. 'Attack it courageously with this powerful flail, which is sometimes called "the sword of the Spirit," and is in reality "the word of God." Such a weapon may seem contemptible in the eyes of the natural man; yet, when it is properly wielded,

* This was spoken in allusion to Mr. Joseph Oakes, at that time a very useful local preacher in the Sheffield circuit, and who had a few days before been preaching at Thorpe, when many souls were convinced of sin and found peace with God.

its consequences are invariably potent and salutary. I have known it in the hands of a feeble woman, bring her husband to "his right mind." In making trial of its efficacy, even little children have caused their parents to cry aloud for mercy. But in every case, much of its heavenly charm and virtue depends on the mode in which it is applied. It should always be lifted up in a kind and loving spirit.'

"I highly approved of the ingenious turn which he gave to this Scriptural metaphor; and his bold and energetic language was most edifying. If he had spoken in this way only before the faithful, all would have been well. But this free discourse was delivered in my native village; and I knew that many people of frivolous minds, and others who were confirmed scoffers, attended our meetings for the sole purpose of carrying away every thing which they could turn into ridicule. I therefore trembled while Mr. Bramwell was preaching, lest the uncommon remarks which he made, should become food for scorners, and furnish a fund of laughter for their wicked companions. But my apprehensions at once subsided, when, at the close of his address, he made a sudden pause, and said with a grave countenance, and in a tone of voice the most solemn and impressive, — 'If any person go from this place and attempt to scoff at the word of truth which he has heard, or the use which I have made of it, — in the name of God I here charge that person to answer at the peril of his soul, for such an act of profanation, before the bar of the great Judge of quick and dead!' This warning was well-timed, and the effects of it most surprising. For though in that place, as in other villages, some few persons monopolize the office of *buffoon general*, and prostitute their talents to the low arts of foolish jesting; yet neither they, nor any one else, ventured to make the least unfavorable allusion to this very singular discourse; thus

> Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
> And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.

"Mr. Bramwell at all times showed himself greatly attached to the Methodist discipline. Every breach in it caused him as much pain, as the strict observance of it afforded him pleasure. It was therefore with much regret he saw some characters of the greatest promise forfeit their share in the benefits of church fellowship, by forming such matrimonial alliances as were contrary to the word of God, and in opposition to the rules of Methodism. Whenever he found any young men or women exposed to this fascinating snare, he faithfully described the heinousness of the offence, and affectionately warned them of the danger into which they were runing. In relation to this subject, he has sometimes mentioned the following affecting occurrence: —

"A young gentleman who was a stranger to religion' paid his addresses to a young lady of great piety. She consulted Mr. Bramwell and

other religious friends, all of whom dissuaded her from giving the least countenance to such a connection. She was shown that no felicitous union could be expected in opposition to the plainest commands of heaven, as they are expressed in Scripture. Her reason approved of their arguments; but the youth, in making his advances, exhibited wonderful attractions, the influence of which her vanity would not allow her to resist. He often assured her, that, instead of objecting to her religious principles, they heightened her charms in his eyes, and he loved her the more on account of them. When it is farther stated, that he plausibly intimated how her bright example would allure him to the practice of all her virtuous observances, it is scarcely needful to add, that he succeeded in his purpose, and she gave him her hand. To save appearances, he attended her to public worship on the Sabbath a few times after their marriage. But alas! too soon he threw aside this mask of duplicity; and proceeded from one act of hostility to another, till at length, with all the malicious and premeditated cruelty of an assassin, he made a desperate attempt on her life! How strongly do facts like this enforce the Scriptural exhortation, Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers!'"

The following letters, addressed to a young lady at Dewsbury, exhibit Mr. Bramwell's strong affection for his spiritual children, and the judicious manner in which he tendered them his counsel:—

LETTER IV.

To Miss Parker.

"Sheffield, March 3, 1796.

"My Dear Sister,—I am glad that you continue in the faith; from which I hope nothing will ever be able to move you.—You know the benefit of loving God with all your heart; and 'I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.' O, dear sister, be a spirit entirely devoted to God! Pray continually! A greater glory will come upon you. You cannot tell what you may receive; but ask in constant faith.

"Let all your life be Christ's.—Consider what he hath done for you, in bringing you into the present light. Thousands have desired to see these things, but have not been permitted. O! be thankful, always thankful! This will improve your mind, and prepare it for the receiving of every other blessing.

"I am, with much respect,
"your servant in Christ,
"Wm. Bramwell.

"P. S.—Can you plead more with God? Can you love God more? Can you have greater union with him? You may have all these with

great increase. I want you to continue a burning, as well as a shining light.—I do not see but you may be as useful as Nanny Cutler, if you give all to God."

LETTER V.

To the same.

"Sheffield, August 21, 1796.

"My Dear Child,—I am truly happy to find you walking in the truth. I greatly long to see you, and hope that the Lord will make your way plain.

* * * *

"You will, I believe, receive a greater fulness; and I think you are very near a more intimate union with God. But, keep your evidence clear for sanctification:—Wrestle with God for this;—and when clear, be on stretch for all the fulness. This will be the means of holding fast all that you receive. I want you to live near to God, and in all the sweet mind of Christ. If you give yourself to the Lord every day, in sweet covenant, and lie always in his hands, he, I know, will make all outward things plain to you. But when we exercise in the least our own will, we are never safe, but liable to every error, and to many evils. You shall see great things even in your life; only be faithful in every little act for God. He will make you ruler over many things.

"Several families have turned to God in Sheffield lately; some of them are of the most respectable class. I wonder at the Lord's goodness. The work is still going on.—May God, who hath made you and me of the same mind and disposition, give his great blessing to Dewsbury this year! Now may the God of peace, who gives peace to his Church give us all peace and love! May the blessed work go on in every place, till this nation is overspread with the glory of God! O, pray, pray! and the Lord will answer.

"I am, with much respect,
"Your servant in Christ,
Wm. Bramwell."

In the preceding part of this memoir, the reader will have perceived how deeply Mr. Bramwell was concerned for the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom. If souls were saved, it occupied little of his concern to know who were the instruments employed by the Almighty. However feeble the means might be, he was anxious that all the glory might redound to the Giver of all good. With these views, he greatly rejoiced to hear of the usefulness of Miss Mary Barrett, a pious female of Lolne, who had begun to exhort in public, and had been rendered a great blessing.

Many eminent divines have entertained discordant opinions respecting female preaching. Mr. Bramwell thought that, in the accomplishment of the great work of human redemption, the Almighty had a sovereign right to make his own election of instruments. To question the validity of any one's call whose labors were clearly sanctioned by the broad seal of Heaven, appeared, in his eyes, a most unwarrantable act of presumption.

It is well known that female preachers are not peculiar to Methodism. They have been recognized as accredited teachers by the Quakers from the beginning. It is probable, that, on this subject, Mr. Bramwell,s sentiments were much in unison with those of the respectable society of Friends. He regarded Joel's prophecy as containing an obvious reference to the Gospel dispensation. In this view it was quoted by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, said God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: And your sons and your daughters shall prophecy; and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days, of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." A few women of great piety were accustomed at an early period in the history of Methodism, publicly to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. They took up this cross, because they considered it a duty; and in bearing a testimony for Christ, they were sometimes called to suffer persecution. Their previous attainments and experience, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, qualified them for this weighty undertaking; and their pious exertions were greatly blessed in the Lord. Among these ancient female worthies, was the late Miss Bosanquet, afterward Mrs. Fletcher, who frequently engaged in this interesting employment. Some persons had expressed a degree of surprise at her continuing occasionally to address a congregation. It was her desire to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and to do nothing by which a weak brother might be offended. She therefore wrote to that "great man in Israel," the Rev. John Wesley, stated her case, and received from him the following reply:—

To Mrs. Bosanquet.

"Londonderry, June 13. 1771.

'My Dear Sister,—I think the strength of the cause rests there,—in your having an extraordinary call. So, I am persuaded, has every one of our lay preachers: otherwise I could not countenance their preaching at all. It is plain to me that the whole work of God termed Methodism, is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore I do not wonder if several things occur therein, which do not fall under *ordinary rules* of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule of discipline was, 'I

permit not a woman to speak in the congregation;' yet, in extraordinary cases, he made a few exceptions; at Corinth in particular.

"I am, my dear sister,

"Your affectionate brother,

"J. WESLEY."

Similar to these were Mr. Bramwell's views, He considered that Miss Barrett had "an extraordinary call," and to him she appeared to be divinely qualified for the work. She had received a good education, and possessed great strength of understanding; she was distinguished for the depth of her piety and the fervency of her zeal, and her labors in public were very successful. He therefore gave her every encouragement to proceed in the path in which, by the blessing of God, she had been rendered useful in her own confined neighborhood, and thought her called by Divine Providence to move in a more extensive circle. Many persons, in different parts of the kingdom, will have reason to bless God that they were favored with the privilege of hearing from her lips the joyful sound of the Gospel. With the subjoined letter to her we will close this chapter,

LETTER VI

To Miss Barrett.

Sheffield, Saturday.

"MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST,—I live in much peace and love; but for a season I am not able to declare it. I have seen his arm made bare lately; but was forced to stop. I thank the Lord he is with you. May a greater power rest upon you and upon the people! Your work is great; and the Lord can work with you.

"I had a blessed time with Mr. Blagborne. He wanted much to see you. God is with him. I hope you will pray for us more and more. Sister Rhodes is come, but she wants lifting up.

"I should hold a love-feast at Mansfield next Monday. Is it possible that you can go in my place? I beg that you will return me an answer by the bearer. It is about twelve miles from Chesterfield. I shall rest, unless I can have a proper supply. I beg you will give my love to all friends. I long to see them.

I am, yours, &c.

"WM. BRAMWELL."

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Bramwell's removal to the Nottingham circuit—Unsettled state of the society in that place—Great exertions to procure a place of worship—Remarkable answers to prayer—Letters—Anecdotes—His conduct as a superintendent.

NOTTINGHAM was the next scene of Mr. Bramwell's labors. The conference of 1798 appointed him to that circuit. A great number of our members had joined the new connection; and those who remained were in a very unsettled state. As Mr. Bramwell was much esteemed, it was thought that his labors might prove peculiarly beneficial, and tend to heal the wounds which the Church had received. The trustees of our large chapel in Nottingham had given it up to Mr. Kilham. Our preachers, therefore, were obliged to officiate in private houses and barns, or such other places as they could procure for the purpose. This was very embarrassing, and caused many painful feelings to the preachers; but to Mr. Bramwell, who was leaving a circuit where all was harmony and love, these things must have been peculiarly distressing. He entered, however, upon his new station with a fixed resolution not to engage in any controversy respecting the division, but to do every thing in his power to build up the broken walls of Zion, and to bring souls to Christ.

The following letter, written soon after his entrance into the circuit, will show what were the leading objects of his attention:—

LETTER VII.

To Miss Barrett.

Nottingham, September 22, 1798.

"MY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD,—I was sorry to hear of your sudden call. I hope your mind is kept composed. God hath given; he will take away when it pleaseth him. Our fathers and our mothers are His. O for submission to his blessed will in all things! This shows how uncertain we are in this world.

"I pray more; and will still cry, 'Lord, make us meet for thy glory!' Every moment may we live to him, and him alone! I am giving myself to continual prayer. What will be the answer, I cannot tell; but shall wait to see his glory in the blessed Jesus. He is our all, and must bring all we need.

"I found things flat in Nottingham. Building chapels are hard times. Almost in every country place I have seen the Lord work; and I do hope to see greater things than these.

"We all expect you immediately when you are set free. The Lord bring you soon, that you may cast your net into this deep sea of iniquity and bring to land a few souls for his glory! I long to show the world

his blood, and then to stand before the throne of God. I pray that you, and every soul that speaks for the Lord, may cry in every place, 'Perpare to meet thy God!'

"I have found very few in this circuit that know any thing about sanctification. What are we? God be merciful to us! O save us, both preachers and people! Amen. Do pray more still, and say to the Lord for me, 'I will not let thee go unless thou bless him.' May we live every day to God!

"I am your affectionate friend and brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

But though Mr. Bramwell always endeavored to preserve his spirituality untainted by groveling objects, and for this cause refused to intermeddle in the mutual railing, which was then a practice too frequent among those who had formerly been "brethren beloved," yet it must not be supposed from this that he was, in the time of difficulty, a supine auxiliary. If he did not enter into *wordy* discussions that ministered to mutual aggravation, he showed by *deeds* that he was greatly concerned for the welfare of the connection, and exerted himself most heartily to raise the necessary funds for erecting a new chapel in Nottingham. For this purpose he was diligent in collecting all the money he could possibly procure from his wealthy friends; and of these there were not a few to whom his ministry had been made a blessing. Mr. Henry Longden, of Sheffield, gives the following narrative of Mr. Bramwell's visit to that town:—

"At that time, be it remembered, Nottingham and Huddersfield were peculiarly circumstanced, with respect to their chapels, and though Sheffield was not one of the circuits enumerated in the minutes of the conference to be applied to for the relief of Nottingham, yet it was deemed proper to send Mr. Bramwell there as a powerful advocate for both those places.

"We can never forget the first appearance of Mr. Bramwell at that time in Garden-street chapel. He had given the people no previous notice of his coming. The sight of him therefore produced an astonishing and almost electrical effect upon the society. The remembrance of the many happy seasons with each other, passed in overwhelming review, and the people could not sing, nor could their beloved minister preach or pray, without the most powerful efforts and frequent interruptions. Their joy was indeed ecstatic. When the object of his visit was known, the people vied with each other, and seemed as if they would pour in their whole store. Their bounty was so lavish, that he had to restrain the feelings and limit the donations of many, till, oppressed with a torrent of love and gratitude, he suddenly left the town to prevent the poor from exceeding the proper bounds of their benevolence. Multitudes tendered their voluntary offerings without making

any inquiry about the object to which it was applied. In this affectionate manner did they testify their love to a revered pastor, who had been a sharer in their joys, and had borne a part in their sorrows."

While he was thus actively employed in Sheffield, he addressed the subjoined letter to his beloved wife, in which it is evident, "Whatever work his hands employed, his heart was still with God."

LETTER VIII.

To Mrs. Bramwell.

"Sheffield, December 7, 1798.

"My Dear Ellen, — I thought of seeing you this evening; but am persuaded it will be well for Mr. Pipe to come a few days. I see a work for myself in Sheffield.

"We have blessed seasons every day, and some are daily saved. I am stretching toward the *mark;* my soul continually goes out after the Lord; I am sure we are just beginning to live, and believe we shall live like our Lord in meekness and love. O! what need of keeping up the strife every day! May nothing slacken our pace! Our fight is nearly over — our crown will shortly be given.

"Let us live every moment free from all the world. We never bring such glory to God as when we cast our all upon him. He loves to bear his children in his arms, and to see them always joyful. O Ellen! trust in him, — pray to him, — work for him, — have no fear, — rush through all to save a soul from burning. I pray for you. — I have the whole family upon my heart. I trust Miss Rhodes will ever join us in seeking this latter day glory! May we all live as near to Christ as it is possible for the spirit in the body! Nothing shall in this world, for one moment, make us rest short of the mind of Jesus.

"I am sure, you will see and know that I am with God in Christ Jesus. I am enabled, through grace, to love all more and more, and to love God in all. O! keep this recollection of soul; let nothing bustle the spirit; let nothing make you CARE; be always at his feet, waiting and longing to be with him! The Lord bless you and the children! Amen.

"I am yours affectionately,

'Wm. Bramwell."

Mr. Tatham, a respectable local preacher in Nottingham, has furnished the following interesting information: —

"It is now upward of twenty-two years since I first became acquainted with our much-lameted brother, Mr. Bramwell. The benefit which I derived from a close intimacy with him during his three years' residence in Nottingham, will, I trust, never be erased from my memory His whole deportment and conversation were such as evinced that he

constantly lived in the spirit of prayer and devotedness to God. On some particular occasions I have had the honor of entertaining him under my roof, when I have been a witness to his ardent supplications at a throne of grace at the early hour of four o'clock in the morning; and this, I have been informed, was a regular practice with him, in winter as well as in summer.

"Some remarkable answers to his prayers have come within my observation. One or two instances I well remember. At the division of the Methodist body, in the year 1797, the society at Nottingham, being deprived of their chapel, had no place of worship in which to assemble: they were consequently under the necessity of erecting a new one, but they found it difficult to procure a piece of land suitable for the purpose; the boundaries of this town, being limited by the common right to the fields which surround it, vacant plots of ground in the interior of the town are not only very scarce, but also very dear. For nine months we had been on the search; during which we made application for such pieces of land as we deemed eligible, but all without effect. No one would sell us any land. The most desirable situation was a paddock belonging to the late John Sherwin, Esq., and various were the applications made in our behalf. But this gentleman also refused to accommodate us with any part of his estate. Thus all our attempts were frustrated, and our hopes apparently blasted. But our extremity was the Lord's opportunity; for, at the very time we were ready to despair of finding a situation, our worthy friends, the late Mr. Henry Longden and Mr. Bramwell, came over from Sheffield to see us. This was on the twenty-eighth of May, 1798. The next morning I had a private interview with Mr. Bramwell, when he asked me if we had procured a piece of land for the chapel; to which I replied in the negative, assuring him that there was not one suitable place in the town for which we had not endeavored to make interest, and yet had applied without success. He heard me, and then said, 'Brother Tatham, let us pray about it.' In his prayer he said, The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, — the cattle also upon a thousand hills. The hearts of all men are in his hands, and he can turn them as the rivers of the south.' He then most feelingly described our situation, crying, 'Lord! thou seest their necessity, and I believe thou wilt provide a piece of land for them, on which to build this chapel.' And soon afterward with increasing faith he said, 'Lord! I believe thou wilt find them a piece of land this day;' which expression he repeated several times, laying a particular emphasis upon THIS DAY. Perhaps no one ever entertained a higher opinion of Mr. Bramwell's faith and prayer than myself; yet, even in the face of that promise which I had frequently seen fulfilled, Mark xi. 24,* when I had

* "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

called to remembrance the various applications we had made, and the disappointments which had followed, I found it difficult to believe against hope.

"But the Lord's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor are his ways as our ways. After breakfasting at Mr. Bartholomew's, then our superintendent preacher, we agreed to search the town for some other piece of land. But in a short time I was called off upon other business, and could not afterward meet with my friends, although I sought them the whole forenoon. I afterward found that Mr. Bramwell and Mr. Longden had gone to Mr. Sherwin's paddock, which we had entirely despaired of obtaining. It will be necessary to observe, that John Fellows Esq., has a garden at the back of his house, which adjoins the theatre on one side, and Mr. Sherwin's paddok on the other. Mr. Longden on his return stated that they had seen some land *near the theatre* suitable for the purpose. I asked if it belonged to Mr. Fellows, because I recollected that he had a garden near the threatre, to which he replied, 'I think that is the gentleman's name.' I then remarked, 'We have long sought in vain; and in some instances have endeavored to conceal our intention of building a chapel. We will now go openly: I will wait upon Mr. Fellows, and ask if he will sell us a part of his garden as a site for a Methodist chapel.' I did so, and after a short pause, that worthy gentleman said, 'I will let you have it.'

"Soon after my return, I discovered that the land which was promised to me, though the most eligible of any in that part of the town, was not the same as that on which Mr. Longden had fixed. He had seen Mr. Sherwin's paddock; and not knowing that it had often been refused to us, he had considered it a most excellent situation. When he related the result of his search, he mistook Mr. Sherwin's name; and gave me to understand that, as well as he could recollect, the lot of which he approved belonged to Mr. Fellows. But being a stranger in Nottingham, he had forgotten the name of the real owner, and was, quite undesignedly, the cause of my going to Mr. Fellows, with whom I happily succeeded. How mysterious are the ways of Providence! For it so happened that two circumstances, trivial in appearance, viz. my absence from the friends who went to look at the ground, and Mr. Longden's mistake in substituting the name of Fellows for Sherwin, put us that day in possesion of the site of land upon which our chapel was afterward built. And all this appeared to be done that the prayer of faith might have its accomplishment. 'Now all things are posible to him that believeth.'

"Another instance of Mr. Bramwell's faith, was at the time when a general alarm agitated our body respecting a bill which M. A. Taylor, Esq. was about to bring into the house of commons, to abridge the religious liberties of Dissenters. Many at that season were led to plead

mightily with God, that our privileges might be continued: and, among others, Mr. Bramwell did not forget to offer up his fervent supplications. At the evening service, one Lord's day, before a very crowded congregation, he got into an agony of prayer; and, after wrestling for some time, he said, 'Lord! thou hast now told me that this bill shall never pass into a law.' Adding, 'It is out of the power of any man, or any set of men, to bring it to pass!' Several of the congregation thought he was going too far; but in about a week afterward the bill was quashed.

"In the great revival of the work of God, which broke out at Sheffield and Nottingham about the same time, Mr. Bramwell took a very active part. At several of our meetings, the outpouring of the Spirit was so manifest, that a whole assembly have been wrought upon and powerfully affected at once. Such glorious displays of the Lord's omnipotent power, and of his willingness to save perishing sinners, I believe will never be forgotten by hundreds, who then partook of the Divine blessing. It seemed as if the Lord was about to 'sweep the nations and shake the earth, till all proclaimed him God.' But in several revivals of religion, when God has raised up various witnesses of his power to save, and instruments to carry his purposes into execution, the enemy of souls has also been very forward to promote the interests of his kingdom. In order to compass his infernal designs, he has raised up instruments to ape or imitate the work of God, in the same manner as in the days of old, when by his servant Pharaoh, he ordered the magicians of Egypt to exhibit the very miracles which Moses had performed by the Divine command. If the hypocrisy of such charcters is not timely discovered, the injury which the good cause will sustain by them is inconceivable. Now Mr. Bramwell was by no means of a censorious disposition; yet he had the gift of discerning the spirits and dispositions of men in a remarkable manner. I have frequently known him detect impostors who have stepped forth to exercise in various meetings. On one occasion, when he was desired to visit a dying man, I went with him. We beheld the wretched object without a shirt to his back. The few rags which hung on him scarcely covered his body. His habitation was a damp, miserable cellar, and a woman was attending him who was represented to be his wife. For some time after our entrance into this dwelling, Mr. Bramwell remained silent; at length he exclaimed, 'All is not right here! I am clear there is something amiss in this place!' Then turing to the woman, he said, 'This man is not your husband. You never were married to him; but for several years you have been living together in sin and wickedness!' His word went with power to their heart, — they both wept exceedingly, acknowledged the charge to be true, and began to entreat the Lord to have mercy upon them."

Like the great apostle, Mr. Bramwell was willing to 'become all things to all men, that he might gain some;" of which the following is a striking instance:—

At one of the villages in the Nottingham circuit, several persons had left the Methodist society and joined the Quakers. Mr. Bramwell heard with pain that they had withdrawn themselves. The next time of his going to preach in that place, it occurred to him, that it perhaps might be profitable to deviate a little from the usual mode of public worship; and therefore, after his sermon, he said to the congregation, "Sit down friends! and we will hold a Quaker's meeting." He then exhorted them to lift up their hearts to God, and earnestly, though silently, to pray for the desent of the Holy Ghost. While he and the congregation were thus engaged, the Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon them; several fell from their seats, some in great distress of mind, while others felt the "overwhelming power of grace Divine." So that Mr. Bramwell himself seemed to be quite overpowered, and cried out, "O, my Lord! I never thought of this!"

Wherever Mr. Bramwell went, he endeavored to promote the comfort and happiness of all around him. When any of the members of the numerous families whom he visited were in distress or affliction, like another Samaritan, his bowels of mercy yearned over them, and his benevolent arm was stretched out to their relief. To lessen the portion of human misery, and to be instrumental in pouring the balm of consolation into the wounded spirit, afforded him the highest gratification. In relation to these remarks, the following narrative of facts was given by one Mr. Greensmith, on the 14th of December, 1818:—

"William Greensmith, son of Thomas Greensmith, of Watnal, near Nottingham, when about nine years of age, was severely afflicted with a scrofulous humor in his eyes, so that he was unable to bear the light even with bandages upon them. Mr. Bramwell was then in the Nottingham circuit, and went in his regular turn to preach at Mr. Greensmith's house. On one of these occasions, he remained all night; and previous to his departure the next morning, when his horse was brought to the door he asked where the boy was who had sore eyes. Mrs. Greensmith replied, that he was in a dark room behind the door. He wished him to be called out; he came and stood near Mr. Bramwell, who put his hand on the boy's head, and looked upward, as if in the act of ejaculatory prayer. He then went out, leaving the child standing; while the latter, as if conscious of some important change, pulled off his bandages, looked through the window, and asked if Mr. Bramwell was gone. On perceiving that his eyes were perfectly healed, all the family were completly astonished. He is now about thirty years of age and has never since had any complaint in his organs of sight."

In this circuit Mr. Pipe became again his colleague, and speaks thus of him:—

"In 1799, I was again called to labor with Mr. Bramwell in the Nottingham circuit. Our chapel in Nottingham was taken from us by the separatists; in consequence of which, our preachers and people were under the necessity of meeting in a barn till another place of worship was erected in the town. In this they were made to prove, that places of the humblest construction became Bethels when consecrated by the blessing and presence of God. Here many souls were awakened and brought to the knowledge of the truth: and when the new chapel was opened, the good work continued to increase and prosper, till they were under the necessity of having it enlarged. Perhaps Mr. Bramwell, in all his travels, never saw more glorious displays of the Divine power, than in this circuit. A great concern for religion discovered itself among all ranks; and many were 'brought out of darkness into marvellous light.' The societies were united and edified; 'and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.' The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified; and several Deists renounced their infidelity, and found redemption in the precious blood of Christ. Provisions at that time were extremely high, but the minds of the people were borne above all; and our social meetings were spiritual, instructive, and delightful. The increase of the societies during the two years I travelled with him, was about one thousand persons; and the circuit was afterward divided into three."

The following important details are communicated by Mr. John Clark, of Nottingham: —

"I was well acquainted with Mr. Bramwell during the three years of his travelling in our circuit. I watched his conduct narrowly, that I might, if possible discover some flaw in a character so celebrated for holiness. But, after a strict observance of his actions and deportment for a length of time, I was compelled to draw this conclusion, — I have never yet seen his equal.

"I never saw in him any thing like duplicity or partiality. No: I believe he loved all men and feared none. His preaching abilities were not of the common kind. His texts were wisely chosen, and his subjects well arranged. It never was any part of his consideration, 'In which of my discourses do I appear to the greatest advantage?' But the inquiry in his closet was, 'What do these people need?' His grand maxim was to adapt his sermons to the condition of his hearers; and this is one reason why his ministry was so successful. His discourses were plain, pointed, and experimental. They were generally accompanied with the demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost. I heard nearly all the sermons which he preached in the town of Nottingham, and do not recollect having once had a barren season, except at one time when he was lame, and could not stand to preach. I have often seen a congregation of two thousand people so affected under his preaching

as to be unable to restrain their feelings, till tears have afforded some relief. It was impossible that any one could sit under him without being benefitted. Ingenious and clear in his ideas, he had always something new, and never preached two sermons alike.

"I attribute the greater portion of his success in the ministry, to his diligence in prayer. It seemed as though, when he was closeted with the KING of kings, he had the varied states of the people unveiled to him in a manner the most remarkable. Thus was he qualified to direct 'a word in season' to each of his hearers. He entered most minutely into their experience. In his preaching he could dissect the mind and feelings of his congregation, and disclose his actual condition to every individual.

"Mr. Bramwell did not blend the doctrines of the Gospel together, and thus form them into one confused mass which nobody was capable of understanding. In a very masterly manner, he displayed distinctly the attributes of God, the fall of man, the doctrine of free grace, the great atonement of Christ, repentance toward God, and faith in the blessed sacrifice of Christ, in order to be justified from the guilt of sin, and from the condemning power of the law of God. He was accustomed to maintain, that a sinner who feels himself thus redeemed and justified, is 'a babe in Christ,' and only a babe. It was necessary therefore, he insisted, that this incipient believer should hold fast the beginning of his confidence without wavering, and go on to be perfected in love, till he obtained the Divine nature, and recovered the blessed image of God. These were the doctrines which Mr. Bramwell constantly pressed on his hearers. He was very desirous that they should ascertain the ground on which they stood, as it regarded their religious experience.

"He never would address a lazy insensible company. He would neither allow children to cry during the time of divine service, nor any one to look around at the door and gaze on passing objects. If they did not appear inclined to give him their undivided attention, he would instantly desist, accounting it no personal mark of disrespect to himself, but a sort of contumely poured on the Gospel. It was his expressed determination not to preach to a people who trifled with the word of God. This commendable practice produced a degree of solemnity in the people, that assisted him much in the impressions which he wished to make.

"He labored to promote the sanctification of his hearers, both by his addresses in the pulpit, and his faithful instructions in private. To accomplish this great object, he fasted, watched, and prayed, in season and out of season, both day and night. The fervency of his prayers, and the greatness of his zeal, were unparalleled. While he was with us at Nottingham, it was his regular practice to rise at four o'clock in

the morning during the summer months, and at five in the winter. The first of his waking hours was devoted to earnest intercessions in behalf of his family and friends, the church, and the world, and for a blessing on his own ministry. The next hour he attended the morning prayer meeting; but if it was a day on which there was none, he woul remain in his study, reading the Scriptures, and studying for the edification of his flock. In this manner he spent the forenoon of every day, seasoning all his exercises with much prayer. The whole of the afternoon was generally appropriated to visiting the sick and poor of the society. Into whatever house he went, it was a point of conscience with him not to leave it without praying. It appeared as though he could scarcely bear to live unless he was made useful. He often entreated the Lord, that he might be delivered from that bitter cup—a useless life.—Indeed, his feelings were such as cannot be described. I have frequently heard him declare in meetings, that he could almost wish 'himself accursed from Christ' if souls might but be saved.

"How often have we heard him, as in an agony, wrestle with God for the distressed! And when they have obtained deliverance, how has he been filled 'unutterably full of glory a[illegible] of God!' At such seasons, his countenance has shone as with a heavenly radiance, his eyes have sparkled like flames of fire, his whole frame has been full of animation, and I have heard him say that he felt as though he could then lift up 'all the apostate race of man' to God. I shall always remember the first renewal of our covenant, at which Mr. Bramwell presided. After the excellent terms of our renewed engagements had been read, Mr. Henry Longden, sen., from Sheffield, spoke to the congregation and prayed. Several others joined in the like exercises. After all, Mr. Bramwell engaged in prayer, when he appeared to lay such hold of the Almighty as to prevail with him for a blessing. The glory of God descended on all the society present in such a powerful manner as I never before experienced. Many were so affected, that at the conclusion of the service, they could not come down the gallery stairs without assistance. That was the beginning of good days at Nottingham.

"I was once attacked by a violent pleuritic fever, when all around me despaired of my life. Many of our kind friends visited me in my affliction and almost unceasing supplication was offered up to God for my recovery. But all prayers appeared to be without effect till Mr. Bramwell came home out of the circuit. He immediately came to see me, and on entering the room, was quite astonished at beholding such a woful change in my appearance. He thought I had all the marks of a speedy dissolution upon me; and giving me a look of the greatest sympathy, he raised my head a little higher by means of a pillow. He then went to the foot of the bed, and began to pray to God in my behalf. His faith seemed to gain ground as he proceeded. He continued his intercessions with the

greatest fervency; and in agony, asked in submission to the will of God, that I might be restored. The Lord heard and answered his servant's prayers. For I immediately experienced such a sweet tranquility and melting of soul, as I am unable to describe. From that moment my recovery commenced and I was soon strong enough to resume my ordinary occupations. Thus Mr. Bramwell might be said to be possessed of a key that opened heaven and drew the blessing down.

"He walked and talked with God: his hourly communion was with his Maker. Many are the blessings, temporal and spiritual, which have been procured by his prayers. I attribute all our great national deliverances to the united entreaties of such men as Mr. Bramwell. When Bonaparte threatened our happy land, our departed friend made the subject not only matter of private prayer, but introduced it into his public intercessions. Who can ever forget the confident manner in which he at those times expressed himself? He was always particularly earnest in his supplications for the health and long life of our good old king.

"As a superintendent, his conduct was most exemplary. He was anxious to know what proficiency the people made in religion. To ascertain this, he met the society in every country place where he went, and requested his itinerant brethren to do the same. The local preachers were also desired to meet every society in the various places in which they preached. He was determined, by one means or other, to know all the members of society, and how they conducted themselves.

He detested slander in all its forms, and would therefore never allow any one to speak evil of an absent person. Adhering to the scriptural direction, 'Tell him his fault between thee and him alone,' he never suffered any difference between brethren to be introduced into the leaders' meeting, unless the parties had spoken to each other about the matter in private. When any affair was brought forward in that meeting, he studied to settle it with as few words as possible, avoiding all debates and cavils which tend to mischief. If any one in his remarks wandered from the point in discussion, Mr. Bramwell always interrupted him, and would not let him confound others by extraneous subjects. We never had an unpleasant meeting on business during the whole of the three years that he spent with us. When any thing unpleasant offered itself, he had both wisdom and courage to act in a discreet and proper manner, and thus the business was at once settled.

"On quarter days and other public occasions, it was his wish to have secular concerns despatched with all convenient speed: and to spend the remainder of the time in earnest, social prayer. From such meetings the local preachers and country leaders departed happy and comfortable, praising God for the enjoyments which they had experienced. It was his constant endeavor to stimulate to action all men that held an office in the Church, and to make them view the cause of God as their

own. Formality and stillness were his dread; he was afraid that they would produce a sleepy and lukewarm spirit.

"How great was his charity to his Christian brethren! I have heard him declare, that he should delight in 'having all things common,' as the primitive believers had after the day of Pentecost. He was ever inclined to 'do good unto all men, especially unto them who were of the household of faith.' To share his last penny with one of the poor of Christ's family, was with him a circumstance by no means uncommon. He would never consent to have more than one suit of clothes, and one pair of shoes, in a course of wearing at a time. And as they began to have a worn appearance, he bought new ones, and gave the old ones to those who were in need. In manifesting his sympathy with the poor and afflicted, he 'wept with those that wept.' When any of the society had acted in an improper manner, so as to disgrace their profession, and, in the execution of Church discipline, were excluded from the body, he was disconsolate, and frequently mourned over them as a man that had been bereaved of his only son."

In the Nottingham circuit, it is seen Mr. Bramwell was again honored with a third year's appointment, which proved very beneficial to that society. Although his labors were eminently blessed, yet from the following letter to the late pious Mrs. Baiston of Leeds, it seems that preaching and other pastoral duties were "weariness and pain to slothful flesh and blood." It is singular, too, that twenty years prior to his death, he should have an impression on his mind that his departure out of this world would be sudden.

LETTER IX.

To Mrs. Baiston.

"Nottingham, May 23, 1799.

"My Dear Sister,—I have promised to write to you, but O! how slow in performing! This, God knows, is too much like my other works—done with reluctance. I have sometimes thought much on this head, whether I shall receive so bright crown as those who so readily enter into the greatest matters. To preach, to pray, &c. &c. continues to be my daily cross. Lord! thy work and will be done in me, and by me, more heartily.

"My faith, my love to Jesus, my union with the saints, and my prospect of glory increase daily. For some weeks past I have been seeking to be ready at any instant. *I have received a persuasion that I shall go in a moment.* Whether this be from my Father or not, I feel it has a good effect upon my mind; I live for him. Do, my dear sister, pray,—yea, always in private pray, that my soul may receive and retain all the glory! Amen, Lord Jesus!

"I hope you will still care for the feeblest child, the tenderest lamb. Never forget you were once weak, — wanting every prop, every prayer. Look well to the lambs. Your great work is to nourish these and lead them on to glory. But at the same time view the blessing which is prepared. Hunger, thirst, cry mightily to God for all he has to give. I am persuaded many draw back after the cleansing touch; and the cause generally is, their not determining to receive the WHOLE. O! see St. Paul, 'I reach forward:' hence, 'I have kept the faith.' You have received blessings of the greatest value in their nature: but these may all be increased a hundred fold. O! I want you to live in the holy place in the nearest union, in the greatest *glory, being changed* from one degree of it into another.

"I have thought that if I am spared, I may receive in one month a double weight. I find all things removed that would hinder, all things at work to my help; and I have confidence that I shall pursue to the utmost the great salvation. What have we done? All seems nothing. I have stood to look back on all my works; but I cannot fix my mind on ONE that yields joy. I instantly look to Jesus, and in him I do rejoice. Lord, save me! save my dear family! save my friends! save thy Church! Amen, Lord Jesus!

"I do and shall ever thank God for your habitation, and the mercy under your roof. Our kind love to dear Mr. Baiston. Pray on! O pray more! I will join you.

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The subjoined letters to Mr. Thomas Jackson, of Dewsbury, and to Miss Barrett, show his spirituality of mind, his zeal for God, and his tenderness of conscience: —

LETTER X.

To Mr. Thomas Jackson.

Nottingham, June 21, 1799.

"MY DEAR BROTHER, — If I had not promised, I should scarcely have ventured to write by the post. I thank God that you have peace and love restored. O! continue it with all prosperity! The Lord save you, your family, and the whole society! Give our dear love to them all. God is with us. I am nearer the throne; and never was so dependent on Jesus: HE IS MY ALL, bless the Lord; — God is working; but we want greater things. I trust we shall see such glory as we have not yet done. Do tell your dear wife we love her in the Lord and shall pray for her. O! may she be the mother in your little church. My brother live every moment in the spirit of prayer. Preach in the same power. Take courage, and work for your God. Amen!

"Write to me soon, and let me know every thing. Continue to pray for me. Be faithful to me. I must have a clear conscience in every thing. I can do nothing because others do it. O! may I keep my soul pure! Lord, stand by me and the Church for ever!

"I am your servant in Jesus,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XI.

To Mr. Thomas Jackson.

Nottingham, September 4, 1799.

"MY DEAR BROTHER, — I thank you for your friendly letter; and I praise God that you continue to pray for me; which I hope you will ever do, till we meet in glory. I am striving with continued prayer to live nearer to God than I have ever done; and he brings my soul into closer union: I live with Jesus: he is my all. O! he lays me at his feet. I am less than nothing in his sight.

"This walking with God! this conversation in heaven! O! how I am ashamed! I sink in silent love. I wonder how the Lord has ever borne with me so long. I never had such a view of God and myself. I pray that every moment of my life may show forth his prise. Praise him for ever! Do give my love to Mr. Miller. The Lord will make him a great blessing to you all. Pray for him, and help him all you can. Your circuit, I believe, will arise.— May the Lord send you salvation, and may all the circuit praise him!

* * * * *

"I pray that grace and peace may be multiplied among you all! The Lord is working in town and country; but we wait for greater things than these. Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly! Amen!

"I am yours, affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XII.

To Miss Barrett.

Nottingham, September 27, 1800.

* * * * *

"I write to you my dear friend and companion in the tribulation of Jesus, our common Lord and Saviour; who is, and shall be, our glory, in this world, and in that which is to come! I am waiting for my place with earnest longing; and am truly desirous of being near my blessed Lord. I am more than ever convinced of this truth, that the degrees in heaven will astonish thousands. And should not we see our privileges on earth? O! let us labor with this view every day. We have not long to work; and, therefore, may we suffer all his will!

I am enabled to consider your calling, and how much you may be drawn from your own purpose. In this I say, 'Thy will be done!'

"Please inform us of the time of your coming, and so abide; because many are kept in a state of suspense, which is rather uncomfortable for us.

"We are unworthy: I feel this! Yet God is among the people, saving and filling. But we want you; and God will come with you. Do come immediately, and let me know the time. Our love to you and all friends.

"Yours, &c.

WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XIII.

To Miss Barrett.

"Taghill, Nottingham, October 16, 1800.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—I was much affected when I came home and found you were gone; especially as we had both promised for Dunnington circuit and Leicester, and thousands were waiting for you at Mount Sorrel. There is such an opening for you in that country as I never saw before.

"I bless God that you ever came among us. Were it in the order of God, I should not have the least objection to stand by you in every place till we take our seats in glory. Pray for us every day. I trust I shall ever pray for you.

"I have had a powerful season at Bulwell; several souls saved. The same at Watnal, and last night at Eastwood. Glory, glory, glory to God! Please write to me soon, and tell me of your journeys and labors in every place. The Lord bless you all! and may thousands be saved!

"Yours, &c. "WM. BRAMWELL."

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Bramwell is appointed to travel in Leeds—His great popularity and usefulness—His qualifications for the ministry—Letters—Some severe trials.—Begins to travel in the Wetherby circuit, and afterward in Hull—Anecdotes—Letters.

In 1801, the conference was held at Leeds. Many of the friends in this town were particularly desirous of having Mr. Bramwell stationed here. Their request was granted by conference, as a favor: and Messrs. Barber and Reece were appointed his colleagues. Previous to his arrival, many had entertained unfavorable sentiments concerning his ministerial talents; and, indeed, the opinion has perhaps been too pervalent, that if a man enter heartily into what has been termed THE REVIVAL, or, in other words, if he encourage prayer meetings, and exhort plain

simple people to unite in carrying on the work of God,—this is a manifest proof of his being a person of only ordinary abilities. Now, were this sentiment actually correct, it would only prove, that the Lord is pleased at times to "choose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." But the sentiment is extremely erroneous; for it is a fact which none will be disposed to question, that Mr. Wesley was a man of the most profound erudition, and it is well known that he was the decided friend and advocate of the work of God. No one can peruse his journals, which have been very properly called a "History of Revivals," without being convinced of the truth of this remark. Mr. Bramwell had not, however, been long in the circuit before the mist of prejudice was completely dispelled; and he was soon regarded as an eminent minister of the Gospel.

From my great and close intimacy with him I had frequent opppor-tunities of judging of his intellectual qualifications, and I think it proper here to state, that he had acquired an extensive acquaintance with the arts and sciences, could read the Scriptures in their original tongues,* and had obtained a knowledge of the French language.

Considering his disadvantages during the early part of his life, it will be readily granted that he could not have mean ideas of human learning. How many laborious days, perhaps years, must he have spent in obtaining those ministerial abilities which, through Divine grace, rendered him so useful in the Church. He was a good sermonizer, and no one was more orthodox or pure in the doctrines which he taught. They who did not attend minutely to his sermons, not readily perceiving his divisions, the formality of which he always despised, considered them as rhapsodies without connection. But he never preached without a plan; and his mode of treating subjects was often ingenious and original. His ardor for the salvation of sinners, and the assistance which he received from the Holy Spirit, frequently exalted him above all formal preachers. Because he was eminently holy and faithful, the Most High condescended to render his preaching effectual to an amazing and unwanted extent. That he had good natural talents, is unquestionable; but the entire abandonment of the wish to shine, was the most consumate victory he ever achieved over the flesh. It was his glory to render himself a servant to all, so that he might win souls. He saw that the heart remained unchanged after the most studied harangues and eloquent orations. The weapons he wielded were, the mighty arms of faith and prayer; and when he beheld Satan's kingdom falling, and crumbling beneath their powerful energy, he scorned all adventitious aids, considering ornament as the destruction of their simplicity and effect.

* To render the Hebrew letters familiar to him, he was accustomed for some time to write his journal in the caracters of that language.

He was frequently consulted both concerning temporal and spiritual things; and many derived peculiar benefit from his judicious and very friendly advice. He well knew how to "condescend to men of low estate," and the poorest members of a society could approach him without the least embarrassment. Far from assuming an air of consequence or superiority while in the company of the humblest followers of Christ, he endeavored by his endearing and affable conduct, to convince them that he was a friend and a brother. Abhorring the fashionable practice of pretending not to know a poor man in the streets, he heartily greeted him. And if his advice was sought about any matter, he would, if disengaged, stand and give it: if he was busy, he would kindly inform the person, that he could not then be detained, but would see him at any other opportunity. Some who were poor and godly, occasionally invited him to take tea with them. He always went if he was at liberty. Several friends and neighbors usually assembled, and great was the enjoyment which they had in each other's company. To the sick he was peculiarly attentive; and he made it his business to call on every Methodist family in the town, and also on as many in the country as he could conveniently visit.

It may not be uninteresting here to record an instance of his pastoral advice, given to three members of the society, who were band mates, one of whom has communicated the following particulars: — Well knowing that Mr. Bramwell was a man mighty in PRAYER, they were very desirous of conversing with him on that important subject. They accordingly waited upon him, at his own house, early one morning, and asked him the following questions: —

1. In private prayer, we sometimes feel power to wrestle with the Lord for increasing salvation for ourselves, and for the extension of the kingdom of Christ; at other times we feel no such power, but rather are distracted, and our minds wander from the point in hand. What should we do in the latter case?

2. If we do not feel much liberty in prayer, should we nevertheless continue in the posture of kneeling?

3. Is what is called by some "burning love, to be attained *gradually* or *instantaneously*?

To these inquiries Mr. Bramwell very condescendingly made the following replies: —

"*First.* — When we find distraction in private prayer, we are often called upon to fight and wrestle, in order to obtain 'a mind stayed upon God.' And sometimes when it is suggested, that we should do something else, viz. read, &c. we ought resolutely to persevere in the path of duty; and when we conquer through Christ, those seasons are often the most profitable.

"*Secondly.*—Should we, however, still feel dissipated, we might then

rise, and walk up and down in the room, and sing, or read some portion of the word of God, and then kneel down and pray again. Or if the body be weak, we may occasionally pray standing, or even sitting.

"*Thirdly.*—'Burning love,' that is, a warm glowing feeling in the heart, is no necessary consequence upon full salvation. It may exist with or without it. It is seldom given for more than a day or two: and then often previous to some peculiar trial, or some extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit."

Dr. Doddridge and some other pious men, have thought that vocal closet prayer is a practice to be preferred by some persons to silent mental devotion, because it tends to keep the attention awake, and preserve the thoughts from wandering. Mr. Bramwell was of the same opinion, and indulged in this beloved spiritual exercise whenever he had an opportunity. Before five o'clock in the morning, he has been heard thus engaged in his own garden, by many persons, as they have been passing to their employment at that early hour. He seems to have resorted to this practice, when his fervent soul has been particularly led out in strong desire to praise *Him* whom it was his delight to magnify.

Herd-farm near Harewood, the residence of Richard Leak, Esq., was one of Mr. Bramwell's favorite places, when he was in this circuit. At the hospitable mansion of that respected gentleman, our ministers were accustomed, once in two weeks, to remain all night, after having preached at Allwoodley Gates. The situation is most delightful. Placed on a gentle eminence, the house is, at a small distance, nearly encircled on three of its sides by a fine wood, that gradually rises to a proud elevation above it. Penetrating into the depths of its most umbrageous retreats, Mr. Bramwell poured forth the feelings of his heart in loud and fervent supplications before the God of heaven. The tones of his strong and mellifluous voice reverberated through all the dells and glades; while the wild inmates of the wood were scared at "sounds unknown before." But they were the sounds of thanksgiving as well as those of entreaty. He has frequently been engaged there for four hours together, till some branch of the family, loath to disturb his devotions, has ventured into his beloved solitude, and invited him to partake of the prepared repast. Always gentle and obliging, he complied with the request; though the heavenly abstraction of his mind at such seasons seemed to say, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of!" His voice was the clue by which they could generally discover the part which he had chosen for retirement; because when not engaged in prayer, which act he reverently performed on his bended knees, his meditations could be indistinctly heard, for they were the utterance of the heart expressed aloud while he walked along the winding paths in the wood, almost every corner of which, being bounded by streams, was favorable to echo. Many were the points of resemblance between Mr. Bramwell and the

Rev. Joseph Alleine, author of the "Alarm to the Unconverted;" and in nothing was this more apparent than in their mutual love of privacy for the purposes of prayer and praise. Mr. Alleine's biographer relates concerning him, "He spent a considerable part of his time in private converse with God and his own soul; he delighted very much to perform his secret devotions in the view of heaven, and in the open air, when he could find advantages fit for his purpose. He used to keep many days alone, and then a private room would not content him, but, if he could, he would withdraw himself to a solitary house, that had no inhabitant in it. And herein he was gratified often by some private friends of his, to whom he did not impart his design: perhaps it was, that he might freely use his voice as his affections led him, without such prudential considerations and restraints as would have been necessary in another place; and that he might converse with God without any avocation or distraction." *

"Neither did he so gaze upon and adore Christ his Redeemer, and his redemption, as to forget to sound forth the praises of God the Creator. For often he hath been heard, with admiration and praise, to take notice of the divine power and wisdom in the works of creation; and therefore in the open air, in the private retirement of some field or wood, he delighted to address himself to God in praise, that his eyes might affect his heart, and awake his glory. And here often he has been heard to say, that man was the tongue of the whole creation, appointed as the creature's interpreter, to speak forth and make articulate the praises which they but silently intimate." †

"And indeed had not his zeal for God's glory and the salvation of souls, engaged him so much to an active life, he could have even lived and died wholly in divine contemplation and adoration; so much did he delight to shrink within himself, and to abandon the view of the desperate adventures and antic motions of a mad world; that so, being shut to these, he might only open his soul to God and glory, displaying it to the glorious beams of the Sun of righteousness. Therefore did he often delight in his devotion to converse with the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, since these were more innocent and less degenerate than man.

"With streams and plants did he delight to walk, and all these did utter to his attentive ear the praise and knowledge of his Creator, and in his unsettled sojournings from place to place, he did often, to use his words, look back with sweetness and great content on the places of his former pleasant retirements, setting, as it were, a mark upon those which had marvellously pleased him in his solitudes, by administering to his contemplative delight." ‡

"All the time of his health he did rise constantly at or before four

* Alleine's Life and Letter's, Page 45. † Ibid. 168. ‡ Ibid. 166.

o'clock, and on the Sabbath sooner, if he did wake. He would be much troubled if he heard any smiths, or shoemakers or such tradesmen, at work at their trades before he was in his duties with God; saying to me often, 'O how this noise shames me! Doth not my Master deserve more than *theirs*?'"†

Mr. Bramwell's earnestness in preaching, and his powerful and successful pleadings at a throne of grace, soon attracted general attention. From his commencement at Leeds, nothing would satisfy him but to see the arm of the Lord revealed in the awakening and conversion of sinners. For this he wept, studied, fasted, prayed and preached. Like the Prophet Isaiah, he often exclaimed, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." It was not long before he saw the fruit of his labors; the Lord poured out his Spirit; numbers were awakened; believers were quickened, and a very general revival took place in the society.

During the first year of his labors at Leeds, all the preachers were united in the work of God; and according to the minutes of conference there had been an increase of three hundred and seventy-one members. The following letters will show the state of Mr. Bramwell's mind at that period. The first was addressed to Mrs. Bramwell when she was at Kingswood for the purpose of seeing her three sons. She was detained there longer than she intended, in consequence of being bitten by a dog.

LETTER XIV.

To Mrs. Bramwell.

"Leeds, September 5, 1801.

"My Dear Ellen,—I am sorry, but I wait and instantly give you into the Lord's hands. But do not attempt to come too soon, lest you should inflame your leg, and thereby make it so much longer in healing.

"I am still giving myself to continual prayer. I want you much; but the Lord knows how to try me, and his will be done! Write again, immediately.—You will find a letter from me at Mr. Tatham's. In your next, tell me exactly how your leg is.

"O may I have power to wait for you with all patience and confidence in the Lord!—I have many things to say to you. I hope our heavenly union will increase yet more and more. Amen! Were I to give way to my feelings, I should immediately come and see you. I am nearer heaven than ever; and this enables me to say, 'The Lord does all things well.' I pray for you continually. O get much more, before you see me.

"I am yours, most affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

† Alleine's Life and Letters, page 170.

LETTER XV.

To Miss Barrett.

"Thorner, November 17, 1801.

"My Dear Sister Barrett,—I heard of your being at Rochdale with success. I understand you have freedom at Manchester. You will do well in not staying there too long, except you visit other circuits, and then return for a season.

"I have long thought that your labors may be attended with greater and more lasting blessings, in the following way:—Suppose you were to conclude sooner in the evening, go to rest sooner, and sometimes meet all that would come in the morning. A number who receive good through your labors, and who love you, sink deep into sloth from your example of lying in bed. Not considering your labors, but following your practice as a plea, they afterward sink a whole society. I think this may be prevented. Unless the people improve time, they never can stand long; and the greatest mean in the world is rising early, and spending some time with the Lord before worldly business commences I want all your fruit to abide, or at least, the greater part.

"Now, as the great work of our salvation depends on our diligence, and as the people will look at our example, even years after we leave them, is it not possible that you and all of us may show this example to the churches? But there can be no harm in trying: and this is the least you can do. *First*, to dismiss the people,—all who choose to go after preaching. *Then* to have what kind of meeting you choose, but to dismiss them again in an hour. *Then*, to go yourself positively. If any remain in distress, leave the work in the hands of others. Retire, and as soon as you have got supper, go to rest; having previously published that you will meet all that will come, either in the chapel or in some house in the morning. Let this be sometimes done, but never lie long in the morning, unless you be sick. You will stand your labor bettre, by being often at it, than by being too long at the same time.

"God is working at Leeds, and in some other places. We have drops.

"I beg you will write immediately, and let me know the state of the churches. I am praying for you. I am seeking to be ready.

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XVI.

To Miss Barrett.

"My Dear Sister Barrett,—from a full persuasion of your call in an extraordinary way, and believing that the design of God concerning you, is to spread the flame of heavenly love in our connection,—I write

to you with all freedom on a certain subject, which has given me much concern. I understand you have some serious thoughts about marrying. I am led to think that this proceeding would prevent the design of the Almighty concerning you.

"Fully understand me; I do not mean that it is wrong to marry, but I think it would prevent in you the answering that great end of your call.

"In the first place, your situation would become local. Now I am certain that this is not your place, with respect to doing general good. You would soon become in a great degree useless.

"In the next place, you may have the cares of a family; but you would not have that influence among members of your own sex.

"I conceive you can only think of altering your state upon one ground.—and that is, 'I am become obsolete! My work is done! I am shut out! I can no do more! I am called to give it up.' If you think so, I think differently. A number of places will receive you; and I think your way is more open this conference than it ever has been. I beg that you will write me all your heart; and if you please, I will immediately consume your letter after reading it, and will keep the whole in my own mind.

"As I am concerned for you, write soon.

"I am quite ignorant at the present why the Lord has kept me here. Things are low indeed in this circuit; and means must have been used to make them as they are. Of this we will say nothing; only, pray for me.

"I must in a few weeks, if spared, strike home, and leave the whole to God. I see hell will rise: but our God is almighty. Keep this letter in your own mind. I beg that you will come this way and go with me to several places before you go, or as you go to Nottingham. I have found much fruit in Birstal circuit. The Lord bless you. Amen!

"Yours, &c.

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XVII.

To Mrs. Bramwell.

"Harewood, April 14, 1802.

"My Dear Ellen,—I received your letter—am thankful to our heavenly Father for his care over you. All things are in peace at Leeds. I think twenty received liberty when Mr. Miller was there. I am much better of my cold; but not well in my back, yet I think, no worse.

"You must do all you can this journey; leave nothing undone. Write immediately, and let me know when you will come home. I am not certain that I can meet you, but will, if possible. It has been much on

my mind, that you may live as Ann Cutler, and I as John Fletcher. Let us follow them, and begin immediately. I believe I have a call for us both.

"O that God may save some of that family!

"I am yours affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XVIII.

To Mr. Taft.

"Leeds, May 27, 1802.

"My Dear Brother,—You must have no doubt upon your mind respecting my regard for you and yours. I am ever the same toward you both, though I have not written so frequently as I ought to have done. I never was more employed than I have been this year.

"I suppose Mary is gone from Margate. I hope light will shine upon her path in all things; and nothing can be better than to wait and see every open door of Providence. The Lord sent her into Kent. I see your union was of God. In several things I am so persuaded, that I have never had the least uneasiness on this head.

"No great work can be done without much opposition. Never look for peace while you proclaim war. I do not know how things will turn out at Manchester. But the Lord reigneth; and he is, I am sure, our God. Fear none of those things. Stand still and see the salvation of God. I often do the most in doing nothing. Pray much, and for me—especially at this time.

"Numbers are saved in Leeds; but I do not see one yard before me. God must provide, or all is over! But he will. Faith claims him for our all. Yours, as ever,

"Wm. Bramwell."

Considering Mr. Bramwell's ardent desire for the salvation of men how must he have rejoiced to see Zion in prosperity, and the society dwelling in amity and peace! But alas! how imperfect is our knowledge of futurity! Very soon after having written the two preceding letters he was called to meet a most tremendous storm. It is certainly a wise ordination of Providence, that we know not what shall happen to us on the morrow. It is probable, that if mankind had a clear view of the trials and difficulties with which they might have to contend during their pilgrimage through this chequered scene, life would prove a burden too heavy for many to bear. It is therefore highly becoming, to bow to the almighty Disposer of all events, and instead of wishing to pry into futurity, to endeavor patiently to submit to the dispensations of Providence, improving and enjoying the present moment, without anticipating future trials. "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof."

During the last year of his ministry at Leeds, Mr. Bramwell was called to peculiar and embarrassing trials, as will appear from the following letter:—

LETTER XIX.

To Mr. Taft.

Leeds, November 30, 1802

"My Dear Taft,—I thank God for the consolation. He has delivered you, and will deliver even to the end. Salvation is of the Lord. Give him all the glory; and, if you keep quite humble, he will preserve you from every word and work which has the least tendency to excite disgust. You know not what you have to do. One day of your life, will, in future, tell for ever. Be always on your watch tower, and continue in prayer, and you will see greater things than these.

"I see still greater things in Leeds. Many are saved in the town, not so many in the country. I have not the help I want. I say sometimes, 'Wo is me! for I am a man beset with opposition from all the powers of hell!' You would be surprised what plans I have discovered to prevent the general crush; but I see shakings through the whole. The work does not extend as I could wish. Here I mourn and wait the hour.

"I never lived so much with God as at present. I can say, 'My life is prayer, and much in agony.' I am waiting for my change; and yet, I sometimes think, my greatest work is to come. O may I be ready for life or death!

"I do assure you, you have numbers of friends, who will help you and your dear partner, by their prayers. Fear not; and while I fast you will find it needful to live well. Be cheerful and thankful. Give my kind love to Mr. and Mrs. Grace. Tell Mr. Grace I have never forgotten our prayer meetings in his parlor, how he used to wrestle with God. Give my love to my dear friend Manger, and to my brethren. Write immediately and let me know every thing.

"Our dear love to sister Taft. I beg that she may never faint. I do live, if she stand fast in the Lord.

"I am your most affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell.

"N. B. We have had such a work in one street as I have seldom seen; many among those who were the worst, are now become the best."

Mr. Bramwell's feelings and conduct during the period to which this refers, are so accurately described by Mr. Dawson in the funeral sermon which he preached on the occasion of his death, that it will appear quite unnecessary to detail them in this place.

After Mr. Bramwell left Leeds, he was stationed in the Wetherby circuit, at the conference in 1803. He was received by the people with

the greatest satisfaction. Many were the seals of his ministry there; and doubtless he has rejoined numbers in the celestial world, to whom, while in that circuit, his labors were rendered eminently useful. His attention to the general duties of the ministry continued constant and undeviating. In all things he appeared as a minister of the Lord Jesus, and gave the most indubitable proofs that the Lord was with him. His usual fervor burns in the following letters:—

LETTER XX.

To Mrs. Z. Taft.

"Wetherby, 1803.

"My Dear Sister Taft,—I thank you for your letter. I am glad to hear from you, and of your well doing. The Lord continue his goodness, and ever succeed your labors with the salvation of souls! How kind the Lord has been in your deliverance, and in blessing you and the dear child! O! praise him for ever! The Lord continue his goodness to you all, and may we all be ready for every event! "Now is the time for receiving the meetness for the highest place in glory. I am with all my soul striving every day, and never enjoyed greater power and love. Glory! glory!

"In all the conflict the Divine presence was with me; and I had testimony that I was doing what the Lord commanded. I shall have the full reward, in giving up all, yea, all friends, for that season. Pray, ever pray, for me and mine! We love you more than ever.

"That rule should not have been submitted to. This I advise, and had all the friends stood firm, it would never have been made. But as it is made, and complied with, I would advise you to act according to it in every thing, while in the connection. This is right,—while in the body to submit to all rules made by that body.

"We want you here; will you come? Write. Mr. Rayson will come for you. I see souls saved nearly every night; but O! the death of this circuit!—every day is an agony to raise any. We have had a great love-feast at Wetherby, and I expect glory at Keswick next Sunday.

"Mr. Wilson and Mr. Rayson's family and numbers beside, all unite with me in great respect and wish to see you. My wife joins me in love to you, to Mr. Taft, and Mary Ann, to your brother and sister. I am in haste, but believe me to be

"Your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXI.

To Mr. Taft.

"Tadcaster, February 24, 1804.

"*My Dear Brother*,—I waited long for an answer to my letter. I am truly thankful God is with you, and shall be with you. O, never grieve the Lord! Watch, pray, and improve time to the utmost. Live in all the union, the love, the great salvation. Time is short. Be a man of God,—none more holy or more devoted to God. I am quite given to him. I feel my dependence upon him every moment. I was never more dead to all below. My soul is all love indeed. Praise my Savior for ever! I saw a blessed work at Whitby, &c. I see souls saved nearly every night in this circuit. At Wetherby not many.

"I should change with Mr. Nelson a month. Mr. Muff has sent for me: scores are saved in his circuit, and he is all alive.

"My wife joins in love, with many friends I think Mrs. Taft should come and show herself once more. Write to me, and pray much for me.

"I am yours, as ever,

"Wm. Bramwell."

In the year 1804, Mr. Bramwell was appointed to the Hull circuit, with Mr. Griffith and Mr. S. Taylor The preachers were closely united, and the work of the Lord prospered. Mr. Bramwell labored with all his might to bring souls to Christ. His ministry was very acceptable; numbers were converted, and the society in general quickened. When he was in the country part of the circuit, he frequently remained all night, by which means he had an opportunity of visiting the members, and of speaking to them concerning the great work of salvation. In this way his labors were rendered eminently useful, because he gained the affections of the people, and they were then prepared to receive instruction, according to their peculiar circumstances. In this circuit there were many remarkable answers to his fervent prayers, one or two of which it may not be improper to record:—

In the frost of 1804 and 5, Mr. Brayshaw, of Hull, had the misfortune to fall, and pitch upon his right elbow. Not finding much inconvenience at the time, he neglected to apply any thing to it, until about the middle of February, when a mortification ensued. So rapid was its progress, that his medical attendants had determined to amputate his arm as soon as he should have sufficient strength to undergo the operation. They probed and laid it open to the bone; but so much was nature exhausted, that it was feared at every subsequent dressing he would have died. An asthmatical cough, to which he had been long subject, then suddenly stopped; a convulsive hiccup came on; and all hopes of his recovery were lost. His family were called in; he took an affectionate

leave of them; and gave them, as he thought, his last blessing. At this important crisis, Messrs. Griffith and Bramwell called to see him as they were going to the select band. Mrs. Brayshaw requested they would remember her husband at a throne of grace in the band meeting. And while they were engaged at the meeting in agonizing prayer for his recovery, Mr. Brayshaw began to cough, the hiccup left him, and his asthmatical cough returned; so that he recovered, to the great surprise of all around him. A friend called after the band meeting, and observed, that she was almost sure that Mr. Brayshaw would recover, for there had been such an uncommon outpouring of the Spirit, accompanied by such faith while prayer was made by those men of God for his recovery, that she had no doubt concerning his restoration. The event proved the correctness of her opinion; and it was generally thought to be a miraculous cure in answer to prayer.

The following account has been received from Mr. Thomas Ryder, local preacher of Thorngumbald: —

"In the year 1805, our daughter Abigail was so very ill of the hooping cough, that at times she appeared to lose her breath, and my wife often thought she was dead. Mr. Bramwell was in the Hull circuit; and when in that part of Holderness where we then lived, he slept in our house. At one of his visits, we told him how violently our little girl was afflicted. He asked several questions concernig her, and then said 'Let us pray!' We knelt down, and the man of God prayed with peculiar fervor, and apparently in strong faith, that the Lord would bless the child, and speedily restore her. The Almighty, whose eyes are over the righteous, and whose ears are open to their prayers, heard and answered the prayer of his servant. Our daughter began to recover from that hour, and never afterward had a severe attack."

He was deeply interested in the comfort and happiness of those among whom he labored; and it appears very remarkable, that when any of his Christian friends were peculiarly tempted or called to pass through heavy trials, their afflictions were often revealed to him. This will be better understood by the following account, transmitted by Mr. Everett, who is now stationed in Sheffield: — "After being in the country part of the circuit, Mr. Bramwell was returning home from Cottingham: on arriving in Hull he dismounted from his horse, and instead of going to his own house as usual, he went to Mr. Adams's. 'Come,' said he to Mrs. Adams, 'tell me the state of your mind. You have been unusually impressed upon my mind all the way from Cottingham.' Mrs. Adams was in very deep distress, occasionod by a peculiar temptation, under which she was then laboring. When she had stated her case to Mr. Bramwell, he said to her, 'Let us pray. For the Lord is about to bring deliverance.' They knelt down, he wrestled with God, the snare was broken, and she was completely delivered." The circumstance

which renders this account more worthy of observation, is, that Mr. Bramwell had no previous knowledge of her temptation.

Mr. Triebner, an aged Lutheran minister, frequently went to the Methodist chapel while Mr. Bramwell was in Hull. A friend one day asked him, "Mr. Triebner, how do you like Mr. Bramwell's preaching?" And possibly anticipating an objection, said, "Does he not often wander from his subject?" "Yes," replied the venerable old gentleman, "he do wander most delightfully from de subject to de heart."

His letters show him to be in this circuit the same earnest, heavenly minded minister of Jesus Christ.

LETTER XXII.

To Mr. Wm. Barrows.

"Hull, October, 1804.

"My Dear Brother,—I hope you are going on in the same way, and much increasing in the love of God. Nothing can prevent your receiving the mind of Christ. Turn all into this, yea, all your concerns. Seek God in all, and acknowledge him in all. He will be with you and yours. You will have to do all the good you can with the greatest patience; and be willing to be blamed for your best actions. 'Behold the Lamb of God!' Live near to him and be patient in all.

"I have had three weeks of agony, but now see the Lord working. I have not preached lately without seeing some fruit of my labor. The Lord is saving souls. O that nothing may hinder! Pray, pray much for me! The Lord bless you. I remain your brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXIII.

To Mr. Cranswick.

"Hull, November 29, 1804.

"*Dear Brother Cranswick*,—I think of you and the families every day. I frequently want to know how you all are. Satan will use a thousand means to damp our love. He will strive to make all things bear a gloomy aspect; and will tell you that you may as well give it up, and that neither Deighton* nor any other place will ever be better. But though you cannot save all or many, yet one soul saved is of the greatest importance. The churches, though small, are of infinite value. Remember your own salvation: never lose the least prayer. It is praying continally that keeps the mind. I am more convinced of this than ever. O! let God have the first and the last! Your dear wife and all your precious little children are his: strive to lay them all in his arms every morn-

* Deighton is a village in the Wetherby circuit, where Mr. Cranswick then lived.

ing; make the act on your knees. God will answer. He will make all your way plain. You will see his glory. I know it is a strife indeed, to keep full amidst unbelief. Do all your work about the house with as few words as possible; but still be kind to all, even to the unthankful; — you will find the great benefit of this. Live to God; be entirely given up to him in all things. The Lord continue his blessing upon you all! I wish to see you soon. O let us take each other into God, and never break the heavenly union!

"I am your affectionate brother,

'Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXIV.

To Mrs. Baiston.

"Hull, January 4, 1806.

"My Dear Sister, — The bearer, Mrs. Helmsley, will be a sweet companion for you, will meet your class, and help you in the blessd way. We have had her much at Hull: she has been remarkably useful. I hope the Lord will be with her among the friends at Leeds.

"I understand you are doing well in your own mind. But ever remember what great things the Lord can do for us. O the veil that is upon us, till the increasing light shines! And I am astonished how little we can know at once. Yet do not faint, do not grow weary, still strive. The greatest salvation is yours — only receive. For if it is step by step you will at least gain one every day; and this will shortly bring you into all the fulness of God. Be always laboring; and labor will be joyful, yea, exceedingly joyful.

"My dear sister do rise a little more early. Do you strive to have all things ready for the day? I do not mean for two days, (you will not hear that,) but for one day. 'Take no thought for the morrow.' If you receive what I call 'the full composure' in the morning, the mind stayed upon God, the solid rest, — this will carry you unto all your little concerns with the utmost patience, and the daily cross will be the blessed means of increasing your heaven. And this is a constant heaven; this is your place to have God your all. I have seen much more lately. I can say to you I live here; I dwell in God, and wonder that I did not feel what I now feel, twenty years ago. But (praise God!) all is well. My kind love to Mr. Baiston.

"I am your dear brother,

"Wm. Bramwell.

With the following very judicious letter to a young preacher, we will close this chapter. — The advice which it offers to him is very important; and one part of it reminds us of the following anecdote. —

The servant of a celebrated doctor of divinity had gone to hear the

Rev. George Whitefield; and on his return was thus interrogated by his master, who did not greatly relish Mr. W.'s popularity. "Well, John! what are your thoughts about Mr. Whitefield?" "O Sir!" said John, "he is a wise preacher, a very wise preacher." "Yes," rejoined his master, "he is a wise preacher; but there are preachers possessed of greater wisdom than he is." —"That may be," resumed John, "yet he is a very wise preacher." His master retired into his study, and in a little time rung for John. When he came, he said to him, "John, he that winneth souls is wise: Mr. Whitefield is indeed a very wise preacher."

LETTER. XXV.

To Mr. Joseph Wilson.

"Hull, July 4, 1806.

"My Dear Joseph,—You have frequently been greatly upon my mind. I was much afraid you went out too soon; but I hope every thing has turned out for the glory of God, the good of your own soul, and for the salvation of numbers. I do pray that this blessed end may be answered in all your labors. The Lord can and will help you, if your eye be single.

"This is the time for your improvement. Give yourself entirely to the work. Rise early. Continue in prayer, in earnest prayer. Keep all your life, all your zeal; yet never be wild. Go on your way. Speak evil of none. Never debate about the work. 'Be a lamb dumb; open not your mouth.' Live in entire sanctification,—all your heart God's throne. Never grieve him, or cause him to depart from you. Take care how you act toward women: keep your eyes, your heart, from wandering. Determine, if you need it, upon fasting. Keep your body under. Be a man of God. I believe I shall have joy, great joy on your account. May it be so for ever!

"Procure Blair's Lectures; they will cost you more than a pound. Read them with much care. Keep to plain words, yet not mean ones. Strive to save souls in every sermon. 'They are the best preachers who bring souls to God.'

"If you should go to Leeds, I shall have the comfort of seeing you. If not write me a letter to Leeds, saying in it all your mind.—Give my kind love to Mr. Blanshard. The Lord bless you evermore! Many souls are turning to God here.

"I am your dear brother in Christ Jesus,

"Wm. Bramwell."

CHAPTER XI.

Mr. Bramwell's travels and success in the Sunderland circuit—His Christian moderation—Anecdotes—Letters—His appointment to Liverpool circuit—Letters.

At the conference in 1806, Mr. Bramwell was stationed in the Sunderland circuit. In consequence of the peculiar notions of his predecessor, Mr. Cooke, who had been very popular there, the society was much agitated. On Mr. Bramwell's arrival he found that the greatest caution and prudence would be necessary in order to preserve the members from biting and devouring each other. Having on former occasions experience the benefit of profound silence respecting disputes, he resolved that he would neither speak nor hear any thing concerning Mr. Cooke's errors. He also enjoyed silence on the subject of the controversy on his colleagues, and determined never to introduce it either in public or in private. When one of the preachers sent him some pamphlets written in answer to Mr. Cooke, he would not allow them to be circulated, but returned them to the author.

While he thus persevered in occupying peaceful ground, the disturbance was almost instantly quashed, and his way was made clear and plain before him. He now began to exert himself, as usual, to win souls to Christ. To effect this he used every possible means. He frequently met the societies, held prayer meetings after preaching, and desired the people to pray. In love-feasts, he always exhorted the people to declare their present experience in few words; and sometimes took the liberty of telling the loquacious that they had spoken long enough. He often cautioned the people against speaking about the *past* when they had but little to say concerning the *present*. By these means variety was introduced. He sometimes called persons by name to speak. When there was great backwardness at band meetings, he would begin at one end of the room and go through the whole assembly, asking all of them the state of their minds.

So ardently did he long for the salvation of sinners, that, when walking with a friend in the streets, he would suddenly leave him and go to warn, encourage, or exhort other persons who were passing at the same time, and to many of whom he was unknown. Early one morning when he was returning from a village in which he had been preaching the preceding night, he met a friend, and said, "O my brother! How much I feel condemned in my mind! The little feathered songsters of the grove have been awake and employed in the praises of God an hour or two before I arose."

While he was in this circuit, he and one of his colleagues met at the

house of a worthy and respected friend, where they continued all night. At that time the family was brought into a very low state. The owner of the habitation in which they lived wished to get it into his own possession for some other purpose. This would have been attended with very painful and distressing circumstances, because no other place could have been procured which would have suited them so well. During the course of the evening, Mr. Bramwell was made acquainted with the whole affair. After performing family worship in a way which will not soon be forgotten, he and his colleague retired, and spent nearly the whole night in prayer for these good people. In a short time afterward, affairs were most unexpectedly overruled for their good, in a manner for which they could not account. But they believe this change was effected in direct answer to Mr. Bramwell's prayers, for "the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

It will appear from the following letters that he did not thus labor in vain, or spend his strength for nought:—

LETTER XXVI.

To Mr. J. Armitage.

"Durham, November 3, 1806.

"My Dear Brother,—I received your kind letter. I praise God that my dear sister Armitage is so much recovered. I hope she will pray always, and her soul will grow abundantly. Say to her for me, 'Be ready, yea, be always ready.' The Lord bless her more and more! I am at the present given to prayer. A great prospect offers in this circuit.—Cooke's chaff had nearly blinded the people. Crowds come to hear; their eyes begin to be open. In one love-feast last Sunday, there was a great shower,—ten persons were brought into liberty. I do not know how it may end. If as it begins, we shall have a great work.

We have too good a house in Sunderland, and the friends are too kind. I have had to watch and fast, or should soon have been ruined with good things. I hope you continue to pray much, and would have you determine to improve your preaching. I know you may. Read, write study, when you have proper time. Live in nothing short of a clean heart. Be kind to all; but submit to none in lightness, &c. &c. Be a weighty man of God. You have much to do. Do all to the Lord. Lose nothing in your business;—I mean, lose no ground when in your business. You need not.

"Write to me. I love you and yours. I will pray for you and be with you in glory. Amen!

"Yours, &c.

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXVII.

To Mr. W. Burrows.

Sunderland, 1806.

"My Dar Brother,—I thank my Lord Jesus for the information I receive from you on the subject of the kingdom of God. The salvation is nearer than when we believed. O what shall we do our Saviour to love? I grieve that my love is no stronger, that I am no more like him. I wonder at his glory, and sink before him with shame. How is it, that the soul being of such value, and God so great, eternity so near, and yet we so little moved? You perhaps can answer me this.

"I never was so much struck with the word of God as at the present. The truth, the depth, the promises, quite swallow me up. I am lost in wonder and praise. My soul enters into Christ in this blessed book. His own sayings take faster hold of me than ever. I could read and weep, and love and suffer; yea, what could I not suffer when I thus see him? Justification is great,—to be cleansed is great,—but what is justification or the being cleansed, when compared with this being taken into himself? The world, the noise of self,—all is gone; and the mind bears the full stamp of God's image: here you talk, and walk, and live,—doing all in him and to him. Continual prayer, and turning all into Christ in every house, in every company,—all things by him, from him and to him!

"O my dear brother! I hope you are doing well,—prospering in health, in your family, in business, in salvation. You will have the daily inconvenience; but this will be the grand means, yea, the loud voice,—'Pray! pray!' and continue in it, plead in it, weep in it, groan in it. You know the way: yea, the Lord hath shown you the Gospel, the great salvation, and you cannot rest as others. No; you must have all; and nothing less than all will quiet your mind. Never grow faint.—Keep the same action, the same labor for the good of souls, the burning love, which will make you rise early, yea, and sometimes late take rest. If things grow slack, Satan suggests 'nothing can be done!' I answer, 'much may be done!' Ploughing, sowing, weeding, pruning, &c. &c. may be done; and this will give us hope of a blessed harvest. Go on, do all in love; but go on, never grow weary in well doing.

"The Lord is good to us: I have seen four hundred brought into society, and I believe nearly all saved from evil. The work, I can truly say to you, is in general deepening through the circuit. Nothing was known about entire sanctification; and on this ground I yet mourn. But we have got a band just begun, and I hope all will receive the blessing. Pray for me! and beg that I may live in all the will of God. I think my wife has stronger faith; her classes are all in a flame. I want to see you; but I am quite uncertain respecting the time: do give

our dear love to Mrs. Burrows, to dear Miss Burrows, to William, John, and my little Josiah. The Lord be with the family, and preserve our children! Give my love to all the preachers, as they come to you.

"I am your brother, as ever,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XXVIII.

To Mr. J. Hanwell.

"Sunderland, December 6, 1806.

"MY DEAR JOHN,—I was glad to hear from you that the Lord is with you, and doing good in the circuit. I bless the Lord that the sun shines a little on Bridlington. Surely God is ready to make all things new, and will be with all who have a single eye and labor to save men. I know that it is no proof of your not being called to the work, when you see yourself so unfit, and feel so much ashamed before God. At sixteen we think we know; at twenty we think we know much; but if we increase in true knowledge, we shall know ourselves to be nothing. Nothing could induce me to continue in the work, but 'wo is me if I preach not the Gospel!' Write all your mind to me again as soon as you think proper.

"The Lord is pleased to help us here. I have seen at the least one hundred brought into liberty. Twenty soldiers are made acquainted with the Lord. A number of them have received pardon, but there has not a great number joined the society yet. The prospect is great.

"Rise early. Keep a match box. Never be in bed late, unless you are obliged to sit up late. Pray! Read! Pray!

"I am your dear brother, as ever,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XXIX.

To Mrs. Pawson.

"Sunderland, January, 1808.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am waiting for my change. I can say, I long for it. I have been preaching two funeral sermons this week, for two eminent Christians; and my soul, at the time, received such a view of that glory which they now enjoy, that earth and all things in it, were swallowed up in God. I must say to my dear mother in the Gospel, 'I now live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'

"I have been for some months laboring to attain to that point,—for nothing for one moment to divert me from God. The Lord has given me this blessing. I now feel the full effect of that passage, 'He dwells in God, and God in him.' I live in God. O what views have I in this state! Creation, redemption, full salvation, the state of the world! I

grieve, but it is in God. I rejoice, but it is in God. I speak, but I find it is in God. I am tempted much, but unmoved in God. O how I long for all the Church to know this great salvation! And yet I can bear with the weak more than ever. I am greatly ashamed; sometimes I blush before the Lord. I can do nothing without him. I find him on my side, and he gives me most striking deliverances. I wonder that God can love me. How is it? But I can adore the Lamb of God.

"My dear Mrs. Pawson, what shall we do to persuade the Church into this union? To be cleansed from sin is great indeed; but to receive the inward glory, in its full influence,—this is the salvation. The Lord waits to impart every thing he has promised; and would, as a kind father, rather, much rather that his children had the whole. I hope you are going on. Fear not; he has saved and protected you, and he will do it to the end. Remember, instead of going from the outward to the inward, we are, as a body, going from the inward to the outward splendor,—which has been too much the case with all churches. The Lord be with you!

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXX.

To Mr. R. Pilter.

Sunderland, March 7, 1808.

"My Dear Brother,—It has been much upon my mind to write to you. I remember with gratitude the information you gave me respecting my friends in Kent. How you are going on this year I do not know, but I hope the Lord is still with you and blessing you in all your labors. Our work as ministers of the Gospel is of such importance, that I frequently tremble exceedingly before I go into the pulpit. Yea, I wonder how I ever dared to engage in such a work. Yet when I am laboring to speak a little, I am frequently so much overpowered with the Divine presence, that I would not leave my work for all the world. O how merciful is God our Saviour! He 'strengthens our weak hands. He will save us.'

"Go on, my dear brother; preach, pray, purge, and plant. Do all in God, and he will stand by you, and work among the people. I hope you see the propriety of the improvement of time. Perhaps 'early to bed and early to rise,' may be the best. I do not know whether you will need more than six hours. I say 'six hours in bed.' This has been sufficient for me for many years. If you find that you can do with so little bed, you have time for all things. What is it you cannot receive? What is it you cannot bear? What is it you cannot do? Live, my broth-

er, in entire sanctification. Be cleansed from sin. Live, my brother, in love, yea, in the fulness of God. Live to be a workman. Do all the will of God in the churches. You will go through the circuit seeking souls. Nothing but souls brought to God will satisfy. You will save yourself and those that hear you.

"All is well here, through the goodness of God,—your relations,—the Church. Numbers are turning to God; but, I think, not so many in Sunderland as there were in the last year. Great crowds come to hear. The chapel is now one of the largest. All the seats are let; a pleasing sight! O to be ready! I labor—I strive—I do grow a little—I live in God. He is all. O the union, the heaven! I never saw myself so little; yet I am 'kept by his mighty power.' Lord, help me and all thy followers to sing thy praises for ever! May I meet you in glory! Amen!

"I remain your affectionate brother,

WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XXXI.

To Mr. J. Robinson.

Sunderland, April 15, 1808.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I saw your mother this morning, who desired I would write to you. I understand that you are quite satisfied you are in your place; I mean as a travelling preacher—a work which makes me, even to the present time, tremble in the presence of God. I am still persuaded, that nothing can support us but that almighty power which raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. Yet it is quite possible for you and me to make this a worldly business; that it may become so formal as to create in us no more concern than any common business in life. Shall the Lord ordain us to this heavenly calling? Shall he empower us with the spirit of zeal and of power? Shall he send us forth into this labor, to save sinners from everlasting damnation? And shall we, after all, lose the true spirit of our calling? How can we then give in our account? How shall we stand before the judgment seat of Christ? Nothing less than the improvement of time, talents, &c. &c. can give us the least plea in that day.

"Consider this, my dear brother, and strictly examine yourself. Do you rise about four o'clock every morning? In order to this, do you retire to rest as soon as your work and eating are over? Or do you sit and chat with the people? Do you give yourself at reading and prayer? I say GIVE, 'give yourself to these.' Are you never in company above an hour at once? And, when in company, do you turn all into profit, into religion? Are you a man of God in spirit, in word, in deed? Do you feel a clear witness of entire sanctification,—the cleansing blood? And do you declare this and walk in it?

"I want you also to be a preacher. And, in order to this, would it not be well to read the Scriptures without comment, find out the breadth and length, depth and height, by digging, prayer, and receiving light from God? Whoever depends on comments will be very superficial, and will never speak with proper confidence. You may sometimes examine a comment after your own labor, to see what difference, &c. but never before it. Write something every day: have a book for the purpose; and never loose one idea which the Lord in mercy gives you. In preaching never be tedious: the world never did, and never will bear that which is tedious. Let your introduction be a short opening to your sermon. An introduction is to prepare the people to receive what you have to say. Let your sermon be clear and strong, reaching every heart. 'Save thyself and them that hear thee.'

"If you have no end in view but the bringing souls to God,—this will cure almost every thing. Strive to bring some home in every sermon. God will be with you, and he will bless you. He will give you the desire of your heart. Be neat and clean in all your clothes; never foppish or fine. Have every thing consistent with your Lord Jesus. Set him before you at all times. Never be ceremonious; yet learn a good address. Be courteous, be kind, never gloomy, never light or trifling. O my brother, live for eternity; the Lord is at hand. Be ready every moment for glory; ever as willing to leave this earth as to go to sleep. Give my love, my wife's love, and John's kind love, to my dear brother Midgley, and to sister Midgley. Pray, pray, pray, and never cease.

"I am yours affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXXII.

To Mrs. Baiston.

"Sunderland, 1808.

"My Dear Sister,—I have long had it upon my mind to write to you. This may be because of our former union in Christ Jesus. For I hope this union will continue with us, yea never be broken. Can we receive a meetness for eternal glory? And can we receive this meetness for glory, while on earth, even in such a short time? Can we in a moment secure an everlasting crown? O my sister, who would trifle, who would suffer any object in this world to divert them from the reward—the full reward? I am frequently astonished that any enlightened person should make provision for the body in such a way as to hinder in the least measure the glorious recompense.

"You will view mountains; and in looking to God, you will reach their tops. But in little things you will use your own strength, and sink to the botom. Christ Jesus hath told us, that nothing can be done sep-

arately from him; and yet we forget the caution, and lose our way. Every thing requires prayer; and if we pray in every thing, we shall always find cause for thanksgiving to God. Keep your proper lookout or view. Keep your continued acts of faith. Keep your utmost patience; for, in seeing, believing, and being resigned, all your enemies will fall before you. My sister, as it respects our great salvation, we have nothing to do with those who began before us, or with those who came in after us, — with counsel from man or with the experience of others, unless these corroborate the testimony. It is plainly what GOD says; for, all he hath said he will do. Set your foot upon the Rock; fix your eye upon the promise; and with your hand lay hold of the purchased blessing. It must come, it must all come. Nothing less than ALL is yours.

"Nothing does my soul more good than to see my fellow Christians claiming their own, — that which is with God laid up against their return. When you receive this cup of salvation, the effect will be, — the clamor of self is over; the slavish fear of being nothing is over; the soul keeps its place in God, and is ready for all that can come upon it. It bears, it forbears; it thinks NO evil; it cannot dwell or live here.

"O this heaven of God's presence! this opening into glory! this weeping over a lost world! this being willing to lay down your life for the Church! 'God is all.' O my soul, I feel its fire, its burning, as I write. God grant the flame may spread, the glory shine! May the world receive it! Places to me are less than ever. Devoted souls are my delight. To see my friends dwelling in God and God in them, affords me one of the greatest earthly pleasures. Go on, my dear sister, go on; the crown is before you. A few more battles, and heaven is won. The Lord Jesus grant that you may never faint! Will you write, and let me know all things concerning yourself, my dear brother Baiston, and friends? I long to meet you all in yonder bright world. Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

"I am your affectionate brother,

WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XXXIII.

To Mr. Preston.

"Sunderland, 1808

"MY DEAR BROTHER, — Nothing in this world can equal the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, especially when the love of God becomes the ruling principle of the soul. To struggle with outward sin is hard work. To fight with the risings of evil nature is hard work. But when the soul receives the all cleansing blood, when the mind enjoys this indwelling God, when he reigns alone, — then we find the great benefit

of salvation: all is quiet, all is calm, — you stand unmoved. Water, fire, devils, men, cannot all disturb your rest. Beside, you are prepared for every work, can preach, pray, &c. &c. and leave all to Him. Some say, 'It is good, — others, 'middling,' — others, 'very bad:' you can still say, 'Glory!' and proceed with your work. Happy man! happy work! happy end!

"I hope you have fallen into no decline, given up no part of your faith or your union with God. Shall such a man flee, and so many souls going to hell? Can you bear to see the world sink lower? It is low enough. We must, by the grace of God, at least have a few, as brands from the fire. If you gain one in a month, see your crown of glory; and if nothing else will stimulate your soul to perpetuate this blessed work, let the place in the city of God ever stir you up to magnify the Lord in your body, whether it be by life or by death. I believe you have not yet received the promise, I know that all things are so delightful when we enter the country, that we shall be occupied in gazing on the flowers, instead of pressing into all the glory, which you will ever find in the centre — GOD. To be swallowed up in him is your glory. Do not stay, because others do. Give kind words to all, but tarry with none. Every thing you have to do on earth will now be a step to heaven. Business will smile with the presence of God. You will see HIM in all things, and you cannot do any thing without HIM. Live, my dear brother, with Abraham in believing, with Elias in prayer, with Daniel in courage, with John in love, with Paul in feeling for the world. Remember 'night and day with tears.' In general, debates are fruitless. If possible, keep from them, though on the purest subjects. Whoever thinks differently from you, be the same kind and affectionate friend to them. Bless them who curse. The Lord be with you.

"Yours, &c.

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XXXIV.

To Mr. Dunn.

"Sunderland, February 7, 1807.

"*My dear Brother,* — If you had not been provided for, I should have sent for you here, as we have called a fourth preacher, and altered this circuit to what I think the most comfortable I was ever in — a fortnight in and a fortnight out. We have three chapels in: one the size of Hull large chapel, another the same with Scott-street, and a third larger. I have seen more than one hundred souls brought into liberty. About two hundred joined us the last quarter, including sixty soldiers, — lions turned into lambs. Such a work of God in the army I have not seen before; and it spreads. I wonder at the power of God among

these men. Seventy now meet in class, and are proved to be quite changed. A revival is beginning in several places. At Durham we have laid the foundation for a new chapel; which will cost about two thousand pounds. A gentleman (not in society) who heard the word, offered one hundred pounds and land. I think it will not be burdened. I am exceedingly followed by Satan, and much tempted; but I do, upon the whole, grow in the grace of God. The Lord keep me and my brethren!

"I hope you will be quite comfortable among the Wetherby friends till conference. Do give my kind love to them in every place. I love them much, and I hope to see them by some means before it is long. My dear brother, read, write, rise early. Give all into the Lord's hands, and your way will be plain, your soul will be alive, your labors will be with success. Time is short, the earth trembles, the mountains shake; yet, 'God is with us,' and he will be in us. Pray for me. I trust I shall ever have reason to love you in Christ Jesus. Amen.

"Your very affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXXV.

To Mr. Armitage.

"Durham, April 20, 1807.

"*My Dear Armitage*, — I thank you for the information you gave me in your last, and I praise God for the conduct of Mr. Moore in this business. I hope all will do well, and that you will, by some means, in some place, receive the 'meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. This glory is set before us, and I thirst more than ever for all the salvation which can be received in this world. I perceive all our labor, prayer faith and working, will be seen in that day, as very little that we have done in order to our entrance into glory. I never till lately had such striking views of the heavenly country. The world and the church are gone, when I view the place, the company, the eternity. My soul cries, out, 'O make, and keep me ready!' The Bible becomes more than ever my delight, and I am ready to say — 'I know nothing.' O how I sink, yea, lie before the Lord! Every thing that I say or do, preaching, praying, &c. &c. seems to me to be nothing compared to what it should be. Here I am, here I live, wondering that even the Lord himself should notice me for one moment.

"I hope you make progress in the heavenly road. God is with you has shown you many things, helped you in many, been kind to you respecting your dear partner, in continuing her with you a little longer. O how you should love and serve the Lord your God! You know, nothing can

be received but in the same way; you began well, you continued, you are in his favor. Now, my dear John, bear his likeness, O bear the image of your Lord! Be pure in heart; never proud, never angry, never peevish, never fretful. Let all within be from heaven, God your all. I trust you will never rest without this. I hope in your next you will say I gave my all to him. I pleaded that I would not let him go. He has cleansed my soul. I feel it. All evil is gone. I live in love,—all love, nothing but love.' Time is short, your work is great; God can do it and he will do it for you. Fear not. Be holy; have the closest union with your Maker, your Saviour.

"Things are doing well here, numbers are turning to the Lord. One of our preachers is sick. I wish Mr. Moore could send me a good preacher from your circuit for three months. But I suppose none of them could leave their business. Could he spare brother Charles Turkington? Or could Charles come to see me, and help me a little, and then return home? How is he situated? Write to me immediately, if there be any prospect in your circuit in a proper way.

"My wife and John unite with me in much love to you all. Pray, pray much more.

"I am your affectionate broter in Christ Jesus,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXXVI.

To Mr. Sigston.

"Sunderland, December 2, 1897.

"My Brother Sigston,—I sit down to write to you what is upon my mind respecting myself, the church, the nation, and the world. "My warfare is continual; I am surrounded with the powers of darkness. The temptations to sloth, to fainting, against preaching, praying, &c. &c. are as great as ever; and I sometimes think, are much increased. Invitations to feast, to eat and drink, are more numerous in this place than I have ever known them. A great many of the friends in superior situations, and naturally friendly, have a tendency to produce these effects. I stand in the Lord—I dwell in him. I am kept by the power of God. Of this I am fully assured. I grow, I am less. I become more ashamed and more dependant upon my heavenly Father. My fellowship with God is closer, more constant, and with stronger affection. I am the most grieved with my preaching. It is so far short of the subject,—redemption, full salvation. I *tremble* as much as ever; and the modesty put upon my soul makes me tremble in the presence of the people. I am using every means by prayer, &c. to be fit to live among angels. O how pure, how holy, must they be in heaven! Lord Jesus, make me to do thy will as those pure spirits do it above!

"From all the proper information I can receive, the Church in England, and the Methodists in particular, are not decreasing in number, and perhaps not much increasing. But I am certain the doctrine of *entire sanctification* is upon the decline; and if not enforced will produce a declension in the work among the people. I do not see how this is to be restored among us; because the greater part of the persons in authority, arising from riches, &c. are much averse to this in their minds. And as the number of such authorities increases, the doctrine will decrease, and this from a fear of displeasing such authorities. Here the glory is departing, and, I fear, will depart. We have to pray that the number of those may be increased who boldly, as at the first, declare the whole counsel of God. If the Methodists had not had among them what no other people have had, then they had not had sin, but now we have no cloak for the neglect. After all this, we must conclude, that the most of the power of God is yet among them.

"A black cloud is over Sunderland and all the seaports, yea, over England itself. Things are fast hastening to a crisis: what that will be is not revealed. God only knows how far the judgment may reach.—The revelations are now most clearly explained by matter of fact; and must not those things which are yet to come, be accomplished?—Things can never continue long as they now are. How is it that there is such a clamor for continued war?—Darkness remains upon us. I wonder at the blindness of men!

"I hope if you do not come over this Christmas, you will write me all your mind on these subjects; and in the mean time, pray, O pray, and pray for us. We are all in peace, but want much prosperity. The Lord bless you and dear Mrs. Sigston, and all the dear friends in Leeds!

"I am yours, very affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XXXVII.

To Mr. Sigston.

Sunderland, April 23, 1807,

"My Dear Sigston,—When I received your last I was unable to answer it, and am not yet prepared! A world of confusion! the whole earth trembles. We are all in the dark, and yet the light of God shines upon this little spot, to the astonishment of thousands. I wonder at our continued salvation. Our God yet fighteth for us; and how can we account for it? The spirit is received in some places, even in its depth; but this is through means. If the ministry is not sound, there is, I perceive great power with God among that people. The preachers sometimes take the praise, and this may create a new establishment; but 'God will reward every man according to his works.' The mixture in

a general way, I am confident, is increasing. The rich, the mighty is upon their seats, and too frequently usurp improper authority, which damps too much the living flame among the simple. Young preachers seek to gain the respect of such persons, to their own destruction. How to stop the torrent, is beyond the wisdom of man, and (I am afraid, in the *ordinary way* of working,) the power of God. Will any thing less do it than judgment, the fire, the sword, the plague, the army, &c? Will any thing less do it than the test, — Live to God, and die for it?

"The stir with the Ottoman makes me conjecture that the time is drawing near. But this is with a few; and, my Lord what can we do? I am confident we can do nothing, only, 'fear God and honor the king,' love all the world, and do a little in the way he hath appointed us, 'stand still and see the salvation of God.' I have lately seen what I never saw before, that is, the great darkness and wickedness which are on all the continent. I am persuaded that the greatest part of the world is now in such a state of superstition, as has never been known: all sects gone, quite gone, from the glory! And, excepting England, and some other nations, the world called 'Christian' is *devilish*. I want much to hear from *Pontavice*, who has now a Protestant Church in France; but I cannot write or receive a letter from him. What do you think? Will America cast us off? Shall we stand alone among the nations? What are your views?

"I have lately seen much into the Gospel. I am convinced our glory is little comparatively; especially as it respects the body. We are 'the temples of the Holy Ghost.' I see the necessity of the greatest purity in the outward man. To keep the whole, requires constant prayer, watching, looking always at Christ. I mean that the soul never be diverted from him for one moment: but that I view him in all my acts, take hold of him as the instrument by which I do all my work, and feel that nothing is done without him. To seek men, world, self praise, is so shocking to my view at present, that I wonder that we are not all struck dead when the least of this comes upon us! * I know immedi-

* On this awful subject the following extract from the Imperial Magazine for December, 1819, may be of service to every minister of the gospel. it is the substance of a remarkable dream related by the late Rev. R. Bowden, of Darwen, who committed it to writing from the lips of the person to whom the dream happened, on the evening of May 30th, 1813.

THE DREAM.

A Gospel minister of evangelical principles, whose name, it will be necessary to conceal, being much fatigued, at the conclusion of the afternoon service, retired to his apartment in order to take a little rest. He had not long reclined upon his couch before he fell asleep and began to dream. He dreamed, that on walking into his garden, he entered a bower that had been

ately when I grieve the Lord, the Spirit speaks within; and to do wrong in the great light is the great offence.

I long to live as near as ever any did; and yet I feel I have not all that Ann Cutler found. My soul is subject to sloth; and I have work, I assure you, to keep all things going at full speed. But when I do this for one day, I see the ground I have gone over. O how swiftly we may run even in this world. I think I am as strong in body to labor as ever I was; and yet I find my sight fails me fast, a lould knock at my door! I am settling all my little things as much as psssible, and long to see the other world. Go on, my dear Sigston, go on! Let all within you praise the Lord; yea, may your whole soul be given up to him! And my dear Mrs. Sigston, live in all the glory of this dispensation! The Lord give you his great blessing, and may all that has ever befallen us, be found the necessary means of brightening our everlasting crown! If you will write and say all your mind on these subjects,

erected in it, where he sat down to read and meditate. While thus employed he thought he heard some person enter the garden; and leaving his bower, he immediately hastened toward the spot whence the sound seemed to come, in order to discover who it was that had entered. He had not proceeded far before he discerned a particular friend of his, a Gospel minister of considerable talents, who had rendered himself very popular, by his zealous and unwearied exertions in the cause of Christ. On approaching his friend he was surprised to find that his countenance was covered with a gloom, which it had not been accustomed to wear, and that it strongly indicated a violent agitation of mind, apparently arising from conscious remorse. After the usual salutations had passed, his friend asked the relater the time of the day to which he replied, "twenty-five minutes after four." On hearing this, the stranger said, "It is only one hour since I died, and now I am damned."—"Damned! for what?" inquired the dreaming minister. "It is not," said he, "because I have not preached the Gospel, neither is it because I have not been rendered useful, for I have now many seals to my ministry, who can bear testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, which they have received from my lips; but it is because I have been accumulating to myself the applause of men more than the honor which cometh from above: and verily I have my reward!" Having uttered these expressions, he hastily disappeared and was seen no more.

The minister awaking shortly afterward, with the contents of this dream deeply engraven on his memory, proceeded, overwhelmed with serious reflections, toward his chapel, in order to conduct the evening service. On his way thither he was accosted by a friend, who inquired whether he had heard of the severe loss the Church had sustained in the death of that able minister ———. He replied, "No:" but being much affected at this singular intelligence, he inquired of him the day and the time of the day when his departure took place. To this his friend replied, "This afternoon, at twenty-five minutes after three o'clock."

with any information respecting the world, the church, yourself and family, you will continue our blessed union in the Lord our Saviour.

"In all commentators, I am at a loss for the depth of the Spirit. Can you say what man has gone fully into it? I think you recommended 'Poole's Synopsis.'

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Mr. A. E. Farrar.

"Investone, December 7, 1807.

"MY DEAR ABRAHAM,—I thank you for your letter, am glad that you are comfortable in your station. God is with you, and he will be with you, if you walk by the same rule, and mind the same things. You have received from the Lord how you ought to preach and walk before the people. To improve all your time, you will find it necessary, after you have done your work, to retire to sleep, as soon as possible, and to rise early. Where you cannot have your fire made, have your tinder box wrap yourself well up, and you will find abundance of all things needful in the morning. Keep all the fire within. 'It is the unction,' said Mr. Fletcher, 'that makes the preacher.' Live in purity of heart. Be saved from all sin, and declare this at every proper season. Never be too long, even in the best company. You will easily find out the time to leave: in this you will retain your proper dignity and variety. Never speak evil of one place or society in the circuit when at another, or of any person to another. In observing this, you will prevent much evil to yourself and your labors. When you preach do not begin too high; you may speak with as much force, and with a better cadence in the lower tone. Your voice will increase in strength, if you keep from the rack. Abraham, be a man of God, a useful preacher, bringing many souls to glory: study this, and you will accomplish it. Let your end always be 'the salvation of men.'

"You can have a book and write all your sermons before you preach them; but do not write too much, neither determine to be too correct in keeping to your plan. Never be stiff, tiresome, &c.: the English cannot bear this. Never be tedious; yet do not be short.—Let them have all from you, but 'much in little.' Never say 'my hearers,' in the pulpit: this would be better from the aged. All your address should be modest and grave, yet sweet and simple. I feel a strong desire that you may ever answer to all I have said of you, that I may never be ashamed of my confident boasting in your behalf.

"Do, O do take my love, much love to every place, to every society and family in Holderness. The Lord be with them! O how I love them.

As to the blessed and dear friends, who inquired in Hull and Beverly, &c. I long to see them all ;—it may be 'at the resurrection of the just. I am sometimes afraid lest the work should stop in this circuit; this may be from Satan; for numbers are still saved. Pray for us, and write me all your mind.

"I am your affectionate friend,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

In 1808 Liverpool became the scene of Mr. Bramwell's labors. From the statement in the first chapter of this memoir, it will be seen that some of his relatives resided in that town. He was received by the society there as an eminent minister of Christ, and soon found the blessed fruit of his labors in the Gospel. Much of his state of mind, the success of his ministry, and his ardent desire for the salvation of his relatives and friends, will be learned by a perusal of the following letters :—

LETTER XXXIX.

To his Daughter.

"Liverpool, October 15, 1808.

"MY DEAR ANN,—I received your letter. I think you retain a true regard for God your Saviour, and for your relations in the flesh. Your abiding in the truth gives me great joy. The loss of all things on earth is little, when compared with the loss of one soul. Let nothing hinder your proceeding. Seek the great salvation from all evil. 'The blood of Christ cleanseth from ALL sin;' and you will receive the full liberty, in looking to God and believing his word. Live in the spirit of prayer. Read the word with much thought and care. If you get established in the will of God, you will find constant happiness; it will become your great delight. Never imagine that you have arrived at the summit. No; see God in all things, and you will see no END.

"You may make progress in other things. A knowledge of history is quite proper; and, 'The Universal History' is the book you should have. I know not how to send it you. I feel very desirous that you should practise music, and learn to play well. At the same time be sure to study the French. You must write to me soon, informing me of what you do every day,—what progress you make in every thing,—in salvation &c.

"Your dear father,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XL.

To Mrs. Hargreaves.

"March 9, 1809.

"My Dear Sister,—I wish to give you some information respecting your friends in Liverpool. I found the society in a very low state, and left out one hundred in Liverpool the first quarter. The second quarter I joined one hundred and thirty new members, saw a number saved who had lost their confidence, and several times received in public a shaking among the people. The work has very much revived this quarter. At first I could find very few who retained the blessing of entire sanctification. That appeared to have been given up for some years; but a number have lately been brought into the glorious liberty. There is a blessed work through the society in Gerrard-street; six or eight persons have been saved at one meeting. Scarcely a class meets, but some of the members are blessed. On Saturday week, in the penitent meeting at Pitt-street, twelve persons were saved. Three found mercy at a class meeting last night. There are not so many returning from the world at the present, yet the society is made truly alive again. A few, both rich and poor, are awakened. Some precious women in rather high life, are truly saved, with whose names your are unacquainted.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XLI.

To Mr. A. E. Farrar.

"March 24, 1809.

"My Dear Abraham,—I thank you for your last latter: at that time you were in health, laboring with all your might to bring sinners to God. I am lately informed that you cannot continue this great work. I am sorry that your strength is so much decreased; but am very desirous of knowing all the circumstances from yourself. A letter, informing me of your recovery would be highly satisfactory. However, God, your heavenly Father, knows how and when to deliver. I am certain he loves you, and will deal with you accordingly. He careth for you, and will pour out his blessing. I am confident you 'will not want any manner of thing that is good.' I believe your soul will rise above it all.

"Now is the time to prove your affection. Now is the time to lay up the weight of glory. If you should preach again, you will have fresh matter. If you should preach no more, you will have your reward. The work of justification is great; yet the entire renewal of the soul in the image of God is much greater. This full salvation will comfort you. Nothing but patience, saying with your Lord, 'I will drink it.' O

the rest in God! I congratulate you. This is your glory, 'Christ my all!' Give up body and soul. Fear not, Abraham. He will be every thing that faith can make him. He will be this to your heart in every state. I could love to see you brave affliction, death, &c. &c. I think I do see you, I hear you saying, 'I am more than conqueror!' Amen! The Lord be with you!

"I am praying ALWAYS; nothing less will do. May I endure, may I abound!

"Yours most sincerely,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XLII.

To Mr. Everett.

"Liverpool, June 21, 1809.

"MY BROTHER EVERETT,—I received yours. I am glad, because you continue strong to labor, and God is with you, sending prosperity. Know your chain, and determine to go to its length. But also determine not to *break* it. 'He knoweth whereof we are made,' and indeed 'we are but dust.' Be filled with the spirit; and yet the spirit will be subject to reason. Go on, my dear brother. I must decrease, but you will increase. Be a burning light; for if ever the fire goes out, you will be fit for nothing.

"Yours, affectionately,

"WM BRAMWELL."

LETTER XLIII.

To Mr. Sigston.

"Liverpool, June, 1809.

"MY DEAR BROTHER SIGSTON,—I received yours. Mrs. Pawson left this world with the truth in her mouth. How we shall return to our sanctification, is another matter. I have some doubt concerning it. It must begin with us; and I fear we shall not begin. That it is gone in a great degree from the pulpit, the Magazine, from Christian meetings, is evident. I should love to have a conversation with you on this subject. I never was more concerned. I never preached with so much power. I never wept and entreated so much, and I never saw less general effect in that way. Yet some scores have lately received it: numbers are at the pool side, and we have had much conviction, and some showers of blessings.

"An idea is going forth, that 'when we are justified we are entirely sanctified,' and 'to feel evil nature after justification, is to lose pardon,' &c. You may depend upon it, this is the devil's great gun. We shall have much trouble with this, and I am afraid we cannot suppress it. I

have felt a strong desire for you and Mrs. Sigston to come here this summer; but if you are called another way I submit.

"I remain your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XLIV.

To Miss Brew.

"St. Helens, July 5, 1809.

"MY DEAR MISS BREW,—I received yours, which was a comfort to me. I rejoice on your account. You are kept by the power of God. It is by *faith* we stand. I believe you have received the forgiveness of sins. It is an unspeakable blessing to have this, and to *know it*. In this you will not rest; for, in reading the word of God, you will find 'great and gracious promises.' They are all yours, for you are Christ's. 'All things are yours.' Shall any thing prevent or hinder you? Can Satan persuade? Has not God performed his word? And will he not give you all things? To hunger, to thirst, to pray, to plead, is your act: and this through Divine power. Will not God undertake your cause and give you full salvation? Fear not. You will find the cleansing blood, you will receive the mind of Christ, and all *through faith*. O for this mighty faith that brings the blessing! When you receive this you will be less than ever. You will feel your nothingness, but your all from God and in God. The sacrifice being complete, the soul will be completely changed into the image of God.—You will then 'bear all things, believe all things, hope all things.' I want you to be devoted to God. You cannot yet know for what end God hath made you so happy: I say so *happy*,—for what hath the world to equal this? You may now answer the end of your creation, of the death of Christ, and the descent of the ever blessed Spirit! You may now offer up strong cries and tears for your relations. You may now drop a word for the Son of God. You may prevent the everlasting ruin of some. You may increase the glory of numbers!

"O see your call. It is of great importance. My advice is, that you reject every thing at the present that would in the least degree draw you from the love of God Keep your centre! never be diverted, never wander; mourn if ever you lose sight of Him. Rejoice in a constant view of Him. What shall we be in a short time? I am lost in astonishment. I see the glory beyond all thought; 'we shall see Him as he is.' This will consist in our being like Him. This 'recompense of reward' is now known to thousands; and what are all their former sorrows now? What are all their temptations? What is persecution now? O! I am 'lost in wonder, love, and praise.' My dear Miss Brew, never shrink from the cross, never be ashamed. Proclaim the Lamb of God. Here him,

Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.' Is it not enough, quite enough to be with him, and to behold his glory? Let us be ready to take our flight, be crucified to the world, to be dead while we live. I should be glad to see you soon, if the Lord will, but his will be done! If you are in your place God will be with you, and you will see the cloud, and know when to move. Pray, O pray much. Let your heart be given up in this duty. A light shall shine upon your path. Do not live as most persons do; be not *almost*, but *altogeher* a Christian. The Lord bless and direct you in all things! and may I always have to rejoice on your account!

"I am yours, affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XLV.

To Mrs. Hargreaves.

"Liverpool 1809.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—We are sorry to find from Betty Gott's letter that you are much worse than usual. The mistery will shortly be unveiled, and you will see God. In the mean time it must be the great labor of faith which can support and bear you up in such circumstances; but God is yet able to bring you through. I frequently think that your everlasting crown will shine superior to thousands, who have not so suffered. O that I could in the least relieve you! But what are wishes or desires, or tears, for one in agony or pain! The Lord Jesus stands before you, and shows himself in blood. Nothing but the viewing of him, can give the least consolation. Salvation is near; though it tarry, wait for it. It will come, it will not tarry. God hears your groanings, and will come down and deliver you,

"On Sunday evening, (a beautiful sight!) I met about thirty of the Sunday scholars, who have a blessed work upon their minds. Twelve young men have found peace. A great work among them. I hope they will be kept. The Lord be with them!

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XLVI.

To Mr. Preston.

"Liverpool, 1809.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—In writing to you I find it on my mind to declare the great love of God our Saviour. Nothing produces such union of souls, such pity for sinners, such warmth of affection towards the church. The love of Christ is my study; but I am frequently at a loss

to understand how it is that my love to him is so little. I am sometimes ready to stumble at myself on this account. 'Am I right? Can I be right in this little love? Could I die for thee? Could I suffer long, and still love with a passion like thine? I cry to God daily, hourly, constantly, to receive a thousand times more love. I must give myself away; for the sacrifice was consumed. I too must be consumed, self must be consumed, all the man must be consumed. And yet I must live.' Thus to loose myself in him, I find is my glory. Then nothing but Christ, in thought, word, preaching, and praying, &c. &c. All the Son of God! His mind, his way, his work, his manner! To this I am coming, I am near. I am just going into my Lord. Here the noise of self, of the world, and of the devil, is over. All is burning, all is rest, yet all is calm within. The eye fixed, the soul established, the tongue loosed, and all in the Spirit! Here the Lord teaches, the Lord governs and the Lord continually supplies.

"This is salvation, and the salvation belonging to all believers. This is the glorious liberty of the children of God. This is for you; and I pray that you may never rest satisfied without it. Amen! The reason why the Methodists in general do not live in this salvation, is there is too much sleep, too much meat and drink, too little fasting and self denial, too much conversation with the world, too much preaching and hearing, and too little self-examination and prayer. A number of Methodists now will be in public the whole of the Sabbath; and if they heard angles all the time they would be backsliders. It is astonishing how the devil is cheating us, and at the same time filling for a moment our heads, and emptying our hearts. Good God! what shall we do? How shall we return Is it possible to bring the body back by the same way, or into the same way? I fear not. I sometimes nearly lose my hope. In all Churches till the present time, Satan has used outward splendor to darken inward glory. Is it too late to see, to know, to understand the temptations of the devil?

"My dear Preston consider these things. Stand and look around. Do not condemn, but pity. Do not destroy, but heal. Do not drive, but draw. If possible, live in all the union, the power, the salvation. Watch keep your body under, mortify, slay, crucify! Be a man of God, never go to bed late, always rise at four if possible, not lying in bed above six hours. Give a good account; stand before the Son of man. O the glory of bringing all things to the judgment seat! This would cure us of sloth and every thing else. Determine. Let me hear from you, and of you; yea, let me hear that you live with God, walk with God. Keep from every thing that goes before the Spirit. Take God with you, but never hang behind. Keep up and abound; 'increase with the increase of God.'

"I have had some blessed showers lately; numbers saved in the meet-

ings; distress among many in the extreme, I mean in temporal things. What will the end be? The powers of heaven are shaken. The inquisition, feudal system, nunneries, devil, coming down! Glory! Glory! Christ will come! He will reign triumphant, We may see it when we are in heaven, if not before.

"Pray for me! God bless you. My love to dear Mrs. Preston. My wife, after being a month in the fever, is recovering.

"I am Your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XLVIII.

To his Daughter.

"Liverpool, May 2, 1810.

"MY DEAR ANN, — I now find you much on my mind; and I have a desire to see you. In this I must endeavor to feel the most perfect resignation. In this world we must suffer; and the absence which is necessary for our well being on earth, is certainly one part of this suffering. You have one that loves you with that regard which is far beyond all my affection; and He will ever watch over you for your salvation. Evil spirits, an evil world, with all around you, will not be able to ensnare, so long as you live in fellowship with your God. Let all things be done with a pure design for his glory. Keep your soul in that sweet calm in him. Watch to please your Lord in all things. Be Mary, have Mary's heart, receive of Christ's teaching, and increase in all those heavenly tempers every day. I long to see you eminent for holiness, for the Divine life, receiving the image of your God, and speaking for your heavenly Master in every action. I am persuaded a work is before you; and, if all diligence is given, if every mean is used, if faith is in constant exercise, if hope prevails, if your soul is fixed on heaven, you will be ready for all the will of God. 'One thing is needful,' which is continual prayer. All will fail unless you labor in this way. Let the times be as frequent as possible, and the manner as fervent as possible. Full of expectation, look for the promise, and believe for the blessing. Be mighty in this duty. You will be strongly tempted to neglect prayer. Satan can continue his authority with all persons who do not give themselves to prayer.

'Armed with all thy might, I cry to thee;
In *this* I shall receive the victory.'

Fear not, Ann! Your Lord hath bought all the glory; and I hope you will claim your part in the first resurrection. O that you may ever be an ornament to the Gospel of God!

"I am your affectionate father,

"WM. BRAMWELL.

"P. S. Can you read a chapter in Hebrew, yet not forgetting your French?"

CHAPTER XII.

Mr. Bramwell's appointment a second time to Sheffield — His conduct and ministerial success — Remarkable Anecdote — Letters — His second appointment to Birstal — His usefulness in that circuit — Letters.

One of Mr. Bramwell's particular friends gives the following account of his second appointment to the Sheffield circuit: —

"In the year 1810, after an absence of twelve years, by the very earnest request of the people, the conference sent Mr. Bramwell a second time to Sheffield. Many of his old friends and fellow helpers, in the former revival, had put off their harness, and where taken to their eternal reward. One of his intimate surviving friends told him, that 'he was come to perform the last office of friendship, to commit his mortal remains to the grave, and to improve the circumstances of his life and death to the living.'*

"When Mr. B. resided first in Sheffield, he was a junior preacher, although his colleagues labored with him in the bond of Christian fellowship: but now he was appointed as the superintendent, and in that office we will first consider him.

"In the commencement of his work he openly avowed that he 'was determined to know nothing among us but Christ, and him crucified. 'None,' he said, 'would be permitted to inform him privately of dissensions among brethren, but that he would always have the accuser and the accused face to face, and that he would neither condemn a man, nor form an opinion upon any case, before the individual whom it concerned had answered for himself.'

"Where a superintendent has to preside in a large circuit, he will often have to exercise all his wisdom, firmness, and forbearance. In the present imperfect state of our knowledge, and the shallowness of the human comprehension, there will be a difference of opinion: and even good men, desiring to promote what they believe will be for the glory of God, and the good of his Church, are in danger of being carried too far by inordinate warmth of feeling and expression. On such occasions, with what mild authority, as an angel of the Church among us, have we seen Mr. Bramwell quell the rising of evil, and reconcile what appeared contradictory to those of more limited views! He was able to manage the whole vessel with apparent ease. In preachers' and leaders' meetings, &c. he would kindly interrupt any circumlocution: while he gave to all a patient hearing, he facilitated the business;

* We refer to the late Mr. Longden; the event accorded with this presentiment. The sermon which Mr. Bramwell preached on the occasion was published in the large edition of the Memoirs of Mr. L.

and, in conclusion, recapitulating the whole, he showed the strength or weakness of the different arguments, and left the decision to the majority of the meeting.

"One great object, which he always kept before him, was economy in the public expenditure. He would submit to any privation, rather than see the stewards burdened with a weight of debt; nor would he permit an increase of expenses, without the probability of obtaining a supply of sufficient funds. Our stewards were in advance when he came into the circuit: under his direction the debt was liquidated, and he left our finances in prosperity. The same principles were extended to the building of chapels. Before a chapel was erected, he first considered the magnitude of the population in that vicinity, the present state of the work, the existing inconvenience of the worshippers, the efforts of the people to raise a sufficient subscription among themselves, and the probable help they would want from others. If all these concurred, it then appeared that the Lord designed a house to be built for himself, in which his great name might be recorded.

"When our societies, under Mr. Bramwell's superintendence, saw that he would not permit improper appeals of private or public charity to be made, they liberally supported those plans which he patronized, rallied round him with Christian philanthropy, and tasted the blessedness of doing good. This transforming, uniting principle, amalgamated all into one effort and enjoyment.

"We beheld him as a minister, and an exemplary man of God, matured by increase of days — shorn, it is true, of some of his masculine vigor; yet he continued to hold a meeting for prayer, every morning at five, where many souls were quickened and saved. He had, if possible, greater importunity and power in prayer, with a richer variety of expression. As an instrument of the salvation of thousands of immortal spirits, he had become venerable. The peculiar answers of his prayers for individuals in afflictive circumstances, can only be revealed when the secrets of the heart will be brought into judgment. The dissensions which he found among us, vanished as we profited by his ministry, and drank into his spirit. The selfish contraction of the heart was expanded by his benign influence, and we become as members of one family, sitting under the same vine and fig tree, none daring to interrupt our sacred peace, and growing prosperity.

"He unceasingly pressed upon his hearers the necessity of Christian holiness, and so preached this doctrine as to manifest he was himself habitually grounded and settled in the experience of it. He raised the standard of Christian experience as high as the Scriptures do, and yet placed it within the reach of every justified person. He gave believers no rest till they sought with all the heart to be fully saved from sin:

knowing that we are in danger of counting our steps back again, if we do not 'press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling.' 'The reason,' he said, 'why many seek to be saved from the remains of the carnal mind, and do not obtain the blessing, is, because they have secretly backslidden, and have forfeited the Divine favor. If they were correctly acquainted with their own state, they would first seek to be justified by faith in Christ Jesus.'

"He faithfully admonished his hearers, that conformity to the world, and inordinate love of riches, open avenues to a thousand snares, and are the great bane of Christian simplicity and holiness; that this is not a state of rest, but of labor; not of indulgence, but of self denial; and that these are sure marks of discipleship, if they spring from faith which worketh by love. His conversation was in heaven, from whence he looked continually for the Saviour. He often expressed his wonder respecting the joys and the employments of the saints in light. He frequently said respecting them, in familiar conversation, 'What are they doing, think you?—How I long to be with them? To quit the burden of mortality, and, glorious as the sun, quick as thought, pass from world to world, and sphere to sphere.' No sudden alarm, no picturesque scenery, no political news, no worldly conversation, interrupted one moment his union. He breathed and lived, in Christ, in God.

"Under the gift of such a ministry, our congregations waited for the word of life, and the brethren were 'striving together, till we should all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto perfect men, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we should henceforth be no more children, but speaking the truth in love, might grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together by that which every joint supplieth, making increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.'"

While Mr. Bramwell was in this circuit, the following occurrence took place, which is related by the person that was the subject of it, Mr. Thomas Riley, one of the many serious among our soldiery, and who is at present sergeant-major in the seventh dragoon guards. It is an additional confirmation of his power with Israel's God:—

"In the month of July, 1811, I was quartered in Sheffield; at which time our regiment was ordered for Spain, then the seat of a protracted and sanguinary war. My mind was painfully exercised with the thoughts of leaving my dear wife and four helpless children in a strange country, unprotected and unprovided for. Mr. Bramwell felt a very lively interest in our situation; and his sympathizing spirit seemed to drink into all the agonizing feelings of my tender wife upon the occasion. He supplicated the throne of grace day and night, in our behalf. My wife and I spent the evening previous to our march, at a friend's house in com-

pany with Mr. Bramwell, who sat in a very pensive mood, and appeared to be engaged in a spiritual struggle all the time, until shortly after supper he suddenly pulled his hand out of his bosom, laid it on my knee, looked me in the face, and said, 'Brother Riley, mark what I am about to say; you are not to go to Spain. Remember, I tell you, you are not: for I have been wrestling with God on your behalf, and when my heavenly Father condescends in mercy to bless me with power to lay hold on himself, I do not easily let him go; he, not until I am favoured with an answer. Therefore, you may depend upon it, that the next time I hear from you, you will be settled in quarters.' This came to pass exactly as he said; for on our march the next day I was informed that the regiment was countermanded; and when we got to our quarters, at Chichester in Sussex, I wrote to him with a grateful heart, informing him that his prediction had received its accomplishment, as our regiment was not to go to Spain.

"The above is a simple statement of a fact which could still be attested by more than one witness, and is an additional proof of the active faith which he exercised in the promises of JESUS, who hath said, 'All things are possible unto him that believeth.'"

Several of Mr. Bramwell's letters from this place, show his heavenly conversation, and his earnest desire to join the spirits of just men made perfect.

LETTER XLVIII.

To his Daughter;

"Sheffield, 1811.

"MY DEAR ANN,—I purposed seeing you this week, when I went into the circuit, but have been prevented, as I had nearly lost my voice, but am now much better. I think it would not be well for you to go to M——— at this time; unless you have got strong faith, and very often retire from company to pray. I know it will be injurious to your soul.

Your being an eminent Christian lies near my heart. You are almost continually on my mind. I want you to be in the closest union with your Lord, always to sit at his feet. Strive to get quiet above a light spirit. You know that the Spirit of the Lord is a happy spirit; but it is a quiet, serious spirit. If you leave the family several times in the forenoon, also in the afternoon, you will accomplish all I want. I have some hope that Mr. Longden will recover; but, you say, it is not the general opinion. Well! he is happy in God. It matters not when we remove, if we be ready; and for this I am striving more than ever. Nothing can satisfy, but the being admitted among the first orders in glory. I have had striking views of that blessed state,—it is all my desire. I long to be with them. We shall be together forever. "O pray! pray!

This is your season,—a glorious harvest! Put in your sickle and reap much—much is promised. Live, O live! Be a woman of God. be a *striver:* learn that blessed track; it is only such who enter in.—Make this your daily work; and 'work it out with fear and trembling.' Dear Ann, do all God's will. I hope you are growing in grace. I pray that you may. To receive the pardon of your sins is a great blessing, but too many rest in sins forgiven. I want you to receive all the salvation from sin, to live in constant union with God, to be all love; and this you will receive in prayer. Plead with God; again I say, 'Strive to enter in;' all the mercy of God will be given. Learn all you can in every way. Study Christ Jesus.

"Your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER XLIX.

To his Daughter.

Sheffield, March, 1811.

"*My Dear Ann*,—You are now entered upon another station in life. I suppose that you imagined your former state called you to make some appearance, which was connected with your standing. In this I have always thought you were mistaken. However, on your leaving the school, even in your own idea, there is no farther plea. I, therefore, as your most affectionate father, wish you by every means to consider how you may in the greatest degree ornament your profession.

You are the daughter of a Methodist preacher; you see my station. You are a child of God, a follower of your Saviour. You will be noticed by all; all will watch, and you should expect it.

"In the first place, let all your manners be open, free, kind to all; yet modest, serious, without the least gloom. Let your clothes be quite plain,—bonnet, gown, shoes, every thing you have. But let them be always clean and good. Though dress is not religion, yet plainness is becoming. A well dressed Quaker appears to me to be near a pattern I wish you to be such, and not to hesitate for one moment; but, without saying a word to any one, determine in God to do so. I believe you will and I shall rejoice. The greater the cross, the greater the glory.

"Again, I wish you to improve your mind in proper books, to study the Scriptures in Hebrew, to read some part of the French Testament every day, and never to be much in company, except when you read to others, or are at some proper work. Study geography, and read biography. Let your times be fixed for private prayer,—say twice in the forenoon, and twice in the afternoon. Always see your next blessing, by reading the word; and gain some ground every day. At certain times visit the sick, and pray with them. Break through in this, and

you will find great consolation: you will feel for them. I pray for you every day, that you may possess these virtues, and be all I desire. May your heavenly Father give you every blessing! I shall expect you to see us, as I have written; and we shall have great joy of you in Christ Jesus.

"Your dear father,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER L.

To his Son.

"Sheffield, May 13, 1811.

"MY DEAR JOHN, — Your last letter has greatly endeared you to me; for I must love you still more from the slightest confidence that you will love God. I esteem the things of time as nothing, when compared with everlasting glory; and wonder at man, (poor man!) who is but the creature of a moment, and yet so bent on ruin! so difficult to be persuaded! so hard to be moved to seek for salvation! Happy! truly happy are they who live to HIM who died for them! This disturbs no learning, no proper labor: on the contrary it fits and prepares the mind for every thing in life or in death. I am most truly waiting for my change. The anticipation of that glory which is to be revealed, ravishes my soul: and from the persuasion that I am eaten up with joy. I think I perceive how you are prevented: you expect the end without the means.

"When I saw my need of Christ, I believed (as you do) that I must be saved, and that none but God could save me. But I found I possessed a degree of power to ask and to pray: and I exercised that power, praying for salvation repeatedly during the day. Though I sometimes felt but little, yet I continued to beg according to the Scriptures, 'ask, and ye shall find.' The Lord drew my mind to converse with his people, to ask them to pray for, and to reprove me, to correct and to search me. This I found to be of great service, and I still see that this is the way of God with man. Use all the means of grace, for they can do no harm, but, under God, will produce the effect. Feel for the church; and you will soon be drawn to act in some little way for the glory of HIM who gave himself for you.

"If man be alive to temporal things, how much more should he be alive to the work of salvation! and to 'strive' is the commandment.

"Your dear father,

WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER XI.

To his Daughter.

"Sheffield, March 4, 1812.

"My Dear Ann,—'All things are of God;' and it is the duty of a creature to sink into his will. A Christian, a friend, a man of God, has left us. Thousands attended his funeral. I never saw such a crowd on any similar occasion. Such solemnity remains upon us, as lays us in the dust. I often say, 'Let me die with him.' Soon, yea, very soon, we shall meet again. The family are much, but very properly, affected. It will, I trust, produce much greater salvation. I feel as if I could do nothing but pray; in this I am saved, and shall ever be saved through my God. What is earth? All nothing, when compared with Him! One proper view of glory eclipses the whole!

Live, my dear Ann, *live!* may your life be devotion! may it be entire *salvation!* I thank you for your being so particular in your news; this is what I like; only just say in every letter your state of mind, which is to me ALL.

"Your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LII.

To Mr. Sigston.

"Sheffield, March, 1812.

"*My Dear Brother,*—The changes in this would greatly affect me. I am more than ever astonished at the forbearance of God. I have seen numbers lately who have never submitted until the hand of God was upon them: but in their extremity they have called upon him, and he has saved them. Surely in the next world, the different degrees of glory will be beyond all we can now conceive. I am so fully convinced of this, that I am striving every day to secure, as far as possible, the first degree of glory. O how my soul is moved to labor for this! Mr. Longden's death has been of much good to many, and I believe the fruit will be found after many days. He made a blessed end.

"Yours affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LIII.

To his Daughter.

Sheffield, June 3, 1812.

"My Dear Ann,—I hope the family and yourself continue in all proper exercise for the benefit of body and mind, because time appears to me exceedingly short. Our removals excite in me some keen feelings

for children, relations, and particular friends. It matters not in what place upon this earth we stand. The Lord is always in every place, waiting to comfort his people, and to make his disciples holy and happy in himself. He *wills*, that we should as soon as possible learn that lesson,—to live independent, to dwell in God, and God in us; and this union to complete our joy in this world, and to raise us to glory everlasting. The company of angels, in our state of probation, would not alone be sufficient; much less the company of the nearest friends, without having Christ Jesus as our constant companion. To resolve upon private as well as public devotion, must be the conduct of God's children; and by close examination of the influence of the Spirit, you will soon find the possibility of coming to understand, in all friendly intercourse, when the call is to private meditation and prayer. You know my dear Ann, what I want concerning this,—that you should answer the end of creation, redemption, the call of the Spirit, and the means of grace; and this by a life of devotion, giving up yourself to a striving, to an agony, to that labor in Christ Jesus, which will produce the image of God, the perfect love, the perfect separation from all things which are not in the life of union with your Redeemer.

"To be singular will be at the first your fear; but look at your Lord, read his practice frequently in the New Testament, and consider how singular he was, and without the least fear of a frowning world. What is my duty? this is the point, without the least regard to consequences. For this reason, retire from every company, however friendly, a number of times in the day. Mind not what looks or words you receive; stay in no place where you cannot do this. Go to no parties, without knowing the persons, and what is likely to take place. Claim your liberty, by never consenting, contrary to sound judgment. Let nothing hinder the full salvation. Read what I have been preaching from several times lately, Phil. iii. 10, 11, 12. Look well into it, and make every purpose or promise your own. You are never in greater danger than when there is the form without the power; 'from such turn away.'

"Make great improvement in the Divine life at the bridge. Every thing in the house I hope will forward the work of your salvation. You will most likely, have shortly to enter into public life. Take care to lay up a stock, and let nothing be wasted. Give a good account to me and to God. We shall have to stand together in judgment. I shall be closely examined as to my conduct toward you, and you on the ground of receiving instruction. It is a day at which I often look. O the change of views by all the world! The torment, the glory! Stand by me here and stand with me then and for every purchased blessing. "Pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.' The Lord write the above upon your heart and bless you in all things. Live, O till I meet you above! 'I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is

at hand.' Pray for your father; pray for the church; pray for the world. Plead, O plead with God, and say, 'I will not let thee go.

I am your affectionate father,

WM. BRAMWELL."

At the conference held in Leeds, in 1812, the friends in the Nottingham and Birstal circuits wished to enjoy the labors of Mr. Bramwell, and as both parties were very urgent, it was determined to take the sense of conference on the subject, when a majority decided in favor of Birstal.

The societies, both in the town and in the circuit, were at that time in a very low state. On the first Sunday that he preached in Birstal, he met the society, and observed, that "slow singing, long prayers, long meetings, and late attendance on the ordinances, were indubitable marks of a slow state of grace." He recommended them to be in their meetings precisely at the time appointed, to be brief in singing and prayer, and in general to close the meetings at the expiration of one hour. He also observed that he would neither speak evil nor hear it, concerning any one; and if any person attempted to act in such a disingenuous manner, he would instantly stop him, and expose his conduct to the persons concerned. He told them that it was his regular plan to remain all night in the different places of the circuit to which he went to preach, and hoped the friends would accommodate him with a bed; if it was a poor one he could sleep upon it, as he wished to see the members in the circuit. But knowing the inefficacy of the best-concerted schemes without the Divine blessing, he added, that all this would not avail without constant, fervent prayer; and many will long remember the arguments which he then used to prevail upon the people to unite with him in this important work. He said with an energy and feeling peculiar to himself, "I know a man that on the bended knees of his body prays for Birstal thirteen times a day sometimes for hours together!"

His next step was to regulate the band meetings. According to rule he would admit none who did not enjoy justification by faith: and to those who professed this and applied, he gave band tickets, recommending at the same time to every member of the public band to meet in private band, and to seek the blessing of entire sanctification. The leaders in Birstal had been met once every fortnight, but he determined to meet them once a week, and kept a list of their names. In every part of the circuit, after preaching on the week nights, he examined the class papers, and inquired after the absentees. There was a special examination of the leaders once a year, when he asked the following questions: —

First.— Are you in debt?

Second.— Do you enjoy a clear sense of your acceptance with God?

Third. — And are you wholly sanctified?

Fourth. — Are you punctual to the time of beginning, whether the members are present or not?

Fifth. — Do you conclude in an hour?

Sixth. — Do you attend to family prayer, morning and evening?

When he came, several of the leaders met two classes; where this was the case, he appointed proper persons to take one of them, observing that no leader could properly watch over more than one class. When the Spirit of the Lord was poured out, (which was the case soon after his arrival,) and the classes increased in number, he divided them and appointed other leaders, observing that twenty souls were as many as any one person could attend to. He had a quantity of class papers printed, with the following rules at the bottom:—

First. — That every leader meet his own class except in case of urgent necessity.

Second. — That he be punctual to the time of his meeting.

Third. — To sing not more than two verses at the beginning.

Fourth. — To be brief in prayer, and particularly to confine his petitions for those present.

Fifth. — That several persons be asked to pray at the conclusion.

Sixth. — That the meeting conclude in an hour.

Seventh. — That the absentees be noted down, and visited by the leader in the course of the week.

Eighth. — That the leader be zealous in speaking to persons who come under the word.

Ninth. — That every leader labor to enjoy the blessing of entire sanctification, as a good qualification for his office.

If any of the classes were in a low state, he privately spoke to some of the most lively leaders to visit them.

This man of God, having thus taken every necessary step, and having engaged his colleagues, the leaders, and the members, together with himself, in earnest prayer to God for a revival, the Spirit of the Lord was soon poured out, especially at Birstal and Gomersal. Many were brought out of darkness into marvellous light; so that at the Christmas day love-feast, 1812, he gave notice that on the following day the new members should be publicly admitted at the chapel in Birstal; when a most pleasing sight was presented to the congregation, — about fifty converts, chiefly young persons, sat round the front of the gallery, to whom he read the rules of the society, asked them questions respecting the time and the manner of their conviction or conversion to God, and, after having put the motion respecting their subscribing to the rules he gave to each of them a copy with suitable advice, and concluded the service with solemn prayer.

In one of the local preachers' meetings, he asked every preacher his

Christian experience, when he advised every man to speak and hear evil of no one; this counsel they all promised to follow. At the Easter Sunday love-feast, 1813, the Spirit of the Lord was abundantly poured out, and many felt his saving power. Six or seven stood up successively to speak. Some declared they had received the pardon of sin; others, entire sanctification; and many more were afterward found who had received the same blessing.

Toward the close of his second year, he had a severe attack of the rheumatic fever. His illness commenced on the Saturday. Being unwilling to omit his appointment on the Sunday, though he could neither mount his horse nor dismount without assistance, he went and preached at Clackheaton. Not being able to ride home, he went to Mr. Pearson's of Gomersal, and remained there eight or nine days. His pain was very severe, but he bore it as a man of God, and was never heard, to complain. He frequently said, "Glory be to God! This is better than hell fire!" He constantly and fervently prayed with the family three times a day; and when he was so ill that he could not bear to be out of bed, he still continued his delightful exercise of prayer.

One evening, when he was very sick, he fell out of his chair upon the floor. There happened to be only one person in the room attending him, who immediately attempted to lift him up, but, not being able exclaimed, "O Mr. Bramwell, what must I do?" As soon as he was able, he replied, "PRAY! That always brings me out on the right side." Prayer was accordingly made, in which he fervently joined. Having, at length been raised with difficulty upon the bed, he pleasantly observed "Continue to pray; we shall never sink while engaged in that exercise."

During this affliction, the friends were engaged in almost incessant supplication for his recovery. Two of the preachers were going to see him one afternoon during his indisposition, and hearing some persons engaged in prayer in a house near the road, they asked a by-stander if there was a prayer meeting at that place, who replied, "Mr. Bramwell, our good preacher, is ill, and they are praying for his recovery."

As long as he remained in this circuit, his conduct was truly exemplary. He used every possible exertion to promote the welfare of the Church and of the world. The Lord was pleased to crown his labors with abundant success; for at the expiration of the second year, it appeared that about five hundred had been added to the society.

We subjoin only two letters written from Birstal, which show the sweetness of his communion with God, and his zeal for the Divine glory.

LETTER LIV.

To his Son.

"Birstal, August 20, 1812.

"My Dear John,—I am more than ever persuaded of the necessity of being at all times ready for that 'eternal weight of glory.' I have lately had a most blessed view of 'the world to come.' All things are dross when compared with Christ, and the glory of his kingdom. I hunger! I thirst! I pray; and with all my heart dedicate my soul to God.

"The world is in a strange state, as it appears to many. I see the Almighty going forth in his judgments; and there will be an end, but not yet. I do not expect to see it in my days. In this I may be mistaken; but there are many huge mountains to be removed, and none but God can accomplish the work. This he will do in his own way: and who can say to him, 'What doest thou?' The world to come is everlasting. I think much of its immutability. As soon as I leave the body, my state will be fixed for evermore. And yet wonder, O heavens! that man should be worse than the ox or ass!" He does not *consider!*

"I am your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The following letter was addressed to a friend who had lost his second wife. It breathes Mr. Bramwell's usual spirit of commiseration, and evinces the great watchfulness which he exercised over himself:—

LETTER LV.

To Mr. Thomas Jerram.

"August, 1813.

"*My Dear Friend and Brother,*—I wonder at the ways of God! Yet, I am certain, he can do nothing but in infinite wisdom. Yet he is past finding out. The Lord provided you with a helpmate; he gave her for a season, and then took her to himself. He most assuredly provided you another; but only suffered her to remain for a season. They are now before the throne,—O happy souls,—where sorrows are all ended. We are left to mourn and share in the world of sorrow a little while, and he will come for us. We shall soon share 'the eternal weight of glory.' How necessary to be ready!

"I was this morning making the inquiry, 'Am I ready? Am I ready to leave the world this moment? Am I ready as an individual, as a preacher, as a husband, as a parent? Do I do all I can every day, in all respects? O my soul! how is it? I may live much nearer; I may enjoy much more; I may have the fulness of God!' I immediately

began to plead for such fulness of God, and will never rest without it.

"I am certain all the glory belongs to them who believe. I hope we shall fully believe, and fully receive the grace of God.

"My dear Jerram, I feel for you; I would share in your bereavement. I thought when I heard it, 'How should I love to live with him a few weeks, to sympathize, to pray, and to sink into the will of God together!' I cannot tell how you will endure the absence; but I know God will help you in such a manner as shall be for his glory. He will counsel; he will give comfort; yea, 'he will be with you,' he will never forsake you. I would advise you to labor to make the sacrifice to God; labor to commit the whole to him, though it be in agony. In this you will find consolation, because the will of God will be yours, his act will become yours; you will unite, and your language will be,—'Blessed be the name of the Lord! Though he slay me, I will trust in him!' May the ever blessed 'God supply all your need from the riches of his glory by Christ Jesus.' Amen!

"As you intend to journey to Hull by Leeds, on your return I wish you to call upon us: we shall be glad to see you, and drink of your cup for a season. We shall have a comfortable spare bed; and, if consistent with your business, you can tarry with us for some time. Please to say to Mr. Taylor, that I am sincerely desirous of seeing him at Nottingham; but collections, extraordinary collections, &c. &c. will, I fear, entirely prevent me. I have scarcely been a night from the circuit since I came, excepting at conference; and I never was more bound to attention than at present. Give our love to Mr. Taylor and friends. God bless you!

"Yours, as ever,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LVI.

To Mr. William Stones.

Birstal, 1813.

"My Dear Brother,—I waited for a letter from you, and received it at length with much pleasure. I am more than ever convinced of the great advantage we receive from entire sanctification. It preserves the soul in rest, in the midst of all the storms of life. It gives such satisfaction in every station, so much approves of the order of God, has such a proper look-out for his glory, a full deliverance from self, and such a strong desire for the good of our neighbor in every way. The world is gone, we live above, yea, we 'dwell in God, and God in us. We can speak when we will, and be silent at our pleasure. Such victory is gained, such salvation is accomplished! We are nothing, and feel it; and we can do nothing without God; hence we give him all the praise of every good thought and action.

"'Keep yourself in the love of God. I have known several who have received it, and some who have lost it. We need not lose it. We may stand, for God is able to keep us for ever. Live in it, talk about it, preach it, and enforce it with all patience, with all kindness; and if you do this, hell, the world, and numbers among the Methodists, yea, some leaders, if not preachers, will in some artful way seek to hinder your success. But what are you to do in your station! 'Pray without ceasing.' Be led 'like a lamb to the slaughter; be dumb, not opening your mouth.' At the same time, never be moved, never give the least way. I have known several who were beaten from their practice. What did the late J. Brown say to me on the subject? He was handled in a strange manner, and by those who should have lifted up his hands. But there is a day of Judgment! If there should be any thing extravagant in your manner, always be willing to acknowledge it; but take care that you are not unawares drawn from the LIFE, and sink into the common mass of DEATH.

"There never was a time when we preachers had greater need to tremble. And Satan's method now is to keep us in the dark. Labor to show yourself approved as a preacher. I would labor, sometimes night and day, to have good sermons. But take care, that your end, in all your reading and study, be *to save souls;* keep this *one end* in view.—There is too much labor now to be popular. It was said of one man at the conference, that 'he labored for an hour to make the preachers and people think that he knew something.' O poor labor! Are not numbers now thus laboring? I see them, and I see they do nothing. How shall such give an account to God? A man goes into a circuit with this view, 'I am determined I will make this circuit know I am somebody! My brother Stones, the salvation of souls, and if possible, a soul brought to God in every day's labor, is one of the greatest consequences. We shall be glad to see you whenever you can come. Give my love to Mr. and Mrs. Jackson,

I am yours very affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Bramwell's labors in London—His indisposition—Letters—His removal to Newcastle—Letters.

In the year 1814 Mr. Bramwell was appointed to labor in the London West Circuit; and from the ideas which he had previously formed concerning the gayety and dissipation of the metropolis, that appointment was to him a source of considerable and painful perplexity. Indeed his entrance on a new circuit was very generally a time of great conflict; and therefore it is natural to suppose, that when about to engage in a spiritual warfare among the rich and the great in London, his mind would be unusually affected. However he requested his Christian friends to unite with him in earnest prayer that the Lord of hosts might accompany him and crown his labors with abundant success. As he was well known in the Methodist connection as an active leader in revivals, there were various and conflicting opinions respecting him; in consequence of which, great numbers soon flocked to hear the new preacher. The following letter clearly exhibits his views and feelings on his entrance into this circuit:—

LETTER LVII.

To Mr. Thomas Crowther.

"Chelsea, 1814.

"My Dear Brother,—I suppose you will by this time be returned from Scarbro'. I hope you have kept yourself in prayer, and in the love of God. Many lose ground at the watering places; and one cause may be, some go without reason, or have no proper argument for being there God will keep us in his own way. Nothing can harm us if we be true followers of him. O that we may increase with the increase of God!

"I had a sore conflict respecting my appointment; but in my first meeting, the Lord poured out his softening Spirit. One man was so filled that he praised God aloud. I perceived at that time and since, that my coming here is of God. I have had several extraordinary seasons, and have been generally well received. A number have been justified, and some awakened. I have been in all the chapels, and given many tickets. But we want Methodism, discipline, religion. The Lord God of Israel, help and bless us in all we have to do! I am weaker than ever, and nothing less than his almighty power can support me in this place. I have found a number of children from different places, who now reside here; several of whom I had not before known. This gives me joy. What shall we meet in the great day of God?

"Our situation in Chelsea is quite to our minds—a pleasant garden, &c. Yet we have a vast population around us. The society here is small and very low. A great debt rests on the chapel, and few seats have been let. We hope to see a change. God is able. We preach only twice on the Sunday, and meet the societies; and on week nights about three times; much the same as at Birstal. My regular walking to my places, &c. is about thirty miles per week. But the friends will provide me beds at some of the places. I am quite satisfied in being here, rather than at any of the other places, for several reasons. O what I feel when I consider the state of London! Ten hundred thousand people! Thirty thousand prostitutes! But so few of God-fearing persons! I often think of what the disciples said to our Lord: 'Behold what manner of stones, and what buildings are here! yet all shall be thrown down!' The thought of such numbers in the way to destruction, is nearly more than I can bear. Yet, with God, it is possible to bear me up. Pour out thy spirit, O Almighty God! Send us a flood from thy throne, and send it soon! Amen and Amen!

Your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

It was not long, however, before the Lord made bare his arm, and gave his servant to see his good pleasure prosper in his hand. Some letters addressed to his friends, had we room to quote them, would show that all his previous fears concerning his new station were soon removed and that he was quite satisfied with his appointment.

While he was thus successfully and pleasantly laboring in the Lord's vineyard, he was again called to experience great bodily affliction. From the following letters it will be seen that he had a return of his old complaint, the rheumatism, which, for a short time, rendered him incapable of labor, but which could not for a moment deprive him of the consolations of religion:—

LETTER LVIII.

To Mr. William Stones.

"London, January 9, 1815.

"My Dear Brother,—I should have written to you long ago; I have only been prevented by another severe attack of the rheumatism. I am now recovering, but the disorder has not yet left my right hand, &c. so that it is with great difficulty I now am able to write. When I came to London, I was in an agony of prayer. I had power with God, and found universal reception. Effects were produced in every place, and in two love-feasts we had a shower. Numbers were set at liberty. I never had greater love and peace. A missionary, one who has been fifteen years abroad, supplied my place in my affliction. I have reason to

believe, I shall be in my work in a few days. The will of God be done! Amen! I was not able to be at our quarterly meeting, but am told, (not certain whether my information may be correct,) three hundred new members have been added this quarter. I wonder at the mercy of God!

"Though I have been in the furnace, yet I assure you that I have had such views of the glory of heaven, and the torments of the damned, that, if I have strength I shall pour out such blessings and curses as I have never done before. O that my God may be with me! I thank God that you find yourself in your place, and that the work of God is seen among you. Never lose your edge. Keep a true Sheffield blade; let it be fine, but sharp.* Never rest till you can say, 'Thy blood cleanseth my soul from all sin.' O to feel it, and then to preach it! God will be with you. Invitations are now proceeding from several towns in France. The committee are sending preachers. There was never known a greater opening. Nothing as yet from Ceylon. I wonder what these lads can do without tongues!

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LIX.

To his Daughter.

"Chelsea, January 3, 1815.

"My Dear Ann,—it is with difficulty that I can answer yours with my own hand, as a stiffness yet remains in both of them. But I am quite recovered from the disease, and have walked out several days. I shall be able, through the blessing of God, to preach in Chelsea Chapel on Sunday, and I hope then to proceed in the blessed work, in which I had success in London, without departing from my own way. Praise the Lord! Friends have been exceedingly kind.

"Your letter greatly refreshed us, and brought tears from us. You are not yet worn out with doing us good: you shall all have your reward. You say but little about the child: I hope he is quite well. I perceived, before I left you, that you would all have one lesson to learn, viz. to love the child; but to live every moment in the sacrifice. This the Lord has been striving to teach you. I hope you were all attentive to the voice of God, and can now say, 'Let William live or die, he is thine; do as thou wilt.' This is the glory of our dispensation—to love all in God,

"Your affectionate father,

Wm. Bramwell."

* In allusion to Mr. Stone's former occupation in Sheffield.

LETTER LX.

To Mr. Thomas Crowther.

"Chelsea, April 11, 1815.

My Dear Brother,—I have found it on my mind to write to you an account of my present state. I am able to go through all my work, and have been so nearly three months. My right hand remains stiff, and my fingers contracted. I am yet weak in my ankles, and extremely weary after walking a few miles. I was worn down, and extremely thin in my body, but my great difficulty now is, to prevent myself from growing too large.

"I never found greater power in preaching, and I see blessed effects under almost every sermon. I never lived in so near a union with God as at the present. I do seek to be ready every moment. The views respecting God and everlasting life, given me in my affliction, were extraordinary. To retain a constant sense of the presence of God, is our glory in this world. It is to live in him and always to feel it. This great salvation,—salvation from all sin; salvation into all the Gospel glory, and to be changed into the same image! I am lost in wonder, love, and praise! O may we drink still deeper into these wells of salvation! You know how;—prayer, constant, private prayer. I have lately been roused from my bed in the night, to pour out my soul to God. I feel I never pray too much: it is my life, it is my all in him.

"We have had great disturbance in London; but you would read of it. I was sorry to find, by the reports from our missionaries in France, that the priests were authorized, or suffered, to select the Bibles which the French took with them and to burn them; and that a great number sent to Spain, were seized and sent back. Since that, you find an astonishing change in France. How wonderful that Bonaparte is permitted to return to his place! I pray most earnestly to God to prevent, if it please him, the great shedding of blood. 'With God this is possible.' Some of the most pious of our society, some officers and others, are called out again. The bustle is very great as a preparation for war: all hands are at work. I was preparing to go to Dunkirk, and this as privately as possible; for we had a congregation there: but this is over for the present. I am persuaded, before much can be done on the continent, the whole of the superstitious machine must be broken in pieces: and by what means the Lord knoweth. Hasten thy coming, O Lord!

"I remain your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXI.

To Mr. Sigston.

Chelsea, May 25, 1845.

"My Dear Brother,—Notwithstanding my long silence, I have had you and your family upon my heart every day. I pray for you continually, that you may experience all the salvation from sin, living perfect love, do all the will of God in this world, and that your teaching may (as it has done) answer two blessed ends, that is, produce the wisdom of man, and the power of God, among your pupils. Your plan of proceeding, in this respect, will discover the fruit of your labors, in time and eternity. O how desirable to lay up a store in every way, to be ready for all the glory, to live in the fulness of God, to walk with him,—feeling the closest union, the testimony that you please him. Pray that your preaching may be effectual, have always one end in view,—souls, souls,—the salvation of your hearers! *Amen, Lord Jesus!*

"You know I have been about three months in the furnace. The mystery of God! 'I know not now!' I cannot find it out, but I know he was with me. The glory I experienced was beyond all I can now relate. I was filled with mercy. I could have shouted 'mercy' continually. Yet I never had so clear a view of the torments of the damned. It was shown me most clearly that the terrors of the law of the Lord are not attended to in our preaching so much as is necessary: and you may depend upon it, this is one cause of our leanness. The world must be made sick; they must feel their need of Christ. O what a view of this when in my sickness! It was also made more plain to me that a full salvation through Christ is ever near to those who hunger. 'His blood can cleanse;' this is the song in heaven. Since my sickness I have had uncommon enlargement in preaching, and never saw greater effects. We might expect thousands to be united to us, and yet we have very few comparatively. There is a great stagnation of trade; almost all persons in London upon the rack, &c. &c. I do think this proves a great hindrance to the word. The spirit is quenched, and there is little or no prayer among those who get touched. I have seen some brought into liberty every week. In this my hands are borne up. I gave him, the everlasting God, all the glory. I remain weak in my ankles and feet, but am able to go through all my preaching and walking. I am not certain what I shall do at the conference. I shall see my way. The faculty tell me, London will not do for me in the winter, as I sweat a great deal in preaching, and have to walk home afterward, three miles or more. Thou, O my God, wilt be my guide, even unto death. My right hand remains stiff, and I cannot write so well as I did; but perhaps you can read this.

"I am your affectionate friend,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXII.

To his Son.

"Chelsea, June 3, 1815.

"My Dear John,—I continue gaining strength in my ankles, &c.—I wish nothing to be said at present about my staying at, or leaving Chelsea. I am so blessed among the people, that I shall feel very reluctant to leave them; and yet if, on the ground of the opinion of the faculty, I cannot stand the winter here, I shall act from duty. 'The Lord make my way plain!' This shall be my prayer.

"I remain your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

From the state of Mrs. Bramwell's health, as well as his own, it seemed to be the opinion of the physicians that it would not be proper for them to winter again in London. Mr. Bramwell's views and feelings on this subject, as well as on the financial state of the connection, are clearly expressed in the following letter:—

LETTER LXIII.

To Mr Thomas Crowther.

London, July 21, 1815.

"My Dear Brother,—I received your letter, and am glad to find you have done so well in the temporal matters of your circuit. I assure you, a number of circuits not far from you are in a much worse situation; Sheffield, Halifax, Huddersfield, &c. And a number of circuits not far from London, are groaning under their weight. Hitherto the conference have got out of their difficulties, but it has been in the wrong way; we have been thrown upon the rack more and more. My prayer is, that we may be so fast this conference, that we may not be able to deliver ourselves without an entire change of system. O that this may be the case. Our collections are much too numerous, and the money is more than the souls of the people. A number of preachers are of the same mind. As to the letter of promise, I know we remonstrated; and, in answer, there was an engagement to this effect,—'Do all you can, and we must make it up.' To whom that letter was directed, or what became of it, I cannot tell. I thought you took it home.

"I thank you for your care and advice. I am truly in a state of uncertainty. I must continually rest in the Lord. It being known that I have some thoughts of removing, I have petitions from every quarter, which circumstance too much affects me. But I dare not make my feelings my law for a moment. I may, if possible, see Westgate Hill on Tuesday morning next; but this depends on my procuring a supply. This place, I am told, is too warm for my wife's complaint, and that she

cannot be well here. I must leave my station till I see her, or have some good ground for expectation that she might return with propriety. From present circumstances, it appears I am called to remove. The Lord be my light and salvation! As to myself, I am surprisingly strong; but I do think I am in danger of a relapse if I stay in London. To be in the cold so much after sweating in the chapels, is dangerous.

"I am yours affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

In consequence of Mrs. Bramwell's ill state of health, as well as from a fear that the winter might prove injurious to Mr. Bramwell, the conference of 1815 stationed him in the Newcastle circuit.

About this period many persons were plunged into great temporal difficulties, in consequence of the want of trade, and the failure of several mercantile houses of great distinction. And as "one event," in this respect, frequently "happeneth to the righteous and to the wicked," some of the Methodists who had been before very respectable, now lost the whole of their property, and experienced the truth of the declaration of Scripture, "Riches make to themselves wings and fly away." The effect which these things produced on the mind of Mr Bramwell, will appear from the following letter:—

LETTER LXIV.

To Mr. Thomas Crowther.

"Newcastle, September 15, 1815.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I ever call to mind the fellowship, the refreshing, the heavenly showers, the glory of God, when I was among you, and I shall, I believe, have cause to praise my God for ever on that account. The Lord is the same yesterday, to-day, and to eternity. The light which has shone upon this nation has, in a very general way, been rejected; and the Lord is most assuredly scourging us for our disobedience. Distress on every side! Men's hearts failing them for fear! Numbers trembling, others falling! The daily changes greatly affect me. What numbers of our friends have been upon the LIST lately, and there must be numbers more. Circuits are increasing in debt; they cannot maintain their preachers; they must have fewer or go to ruin. If my plan had been adopted twelve years ago, it would have prevented all this. I know it would. But here we are looking at each other, and all are fast. Continual prayer, and doing all we can for souls in these times, is the way to keep up. But my feelings when among distressed families, can only be borne up by the power of God.

"I may see you on my way to Sheffield, but all things are uncertain. May we every day look to God, and increase in all grace, that we may share in the everlasting glory! We have a blessed work in some parts of this circuit. The Lord be with you! Amen!

"My hand is yet contracted; I can scarce write legibly.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

Although the subject of this memoir had still to endure much personal affliction, yet his desire for the salvation of men seemed to become more ardent. The following records will show the state of his mind in this respect, and his patient, yet eager waiting for the appearing of his Lord:—

LETTER. LXV.

To Mr. Johnson.

"Newcastle, October 26, 1815.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—It has been much upon my mind to give your family some account of our state, as I know that your good wishes for our welfare will lead you all to unite in our sorrows and our joys. It is but a little time since I received my wife at Newcastle. She was somewhat recovered when she came, but has had a severe relapse, and was brought again into an extremely weak state. Within these few days, she has had a little more strength; and may yet, through the blessing of God, be restored to her former state of health. But this is a doubtful case. 'Father! thy will be done!' We shall live together in eternal glory. I have continued in good health, only that in my right hand there remains some relics of the rheumatism. I am strong to labor, and find the blessing of God upon my little work.

"I am, I do assure you, waiting every day for my change; and I see the heavenly throng waiting for me. I long more than ever to be there, 'where we shall see his face, and never, never sin.' The Lord poured out his blessing in our first love meeting. Six or seven entered into liberty. I receive this from my heavenly Father, as a token for good. In our second love-feast, none but the society were admitted. It was quite crowded, although held a few miles from Newcastle. At the beginning all were quiet, and in considerable suspense for about an hour. But in an agony of prayer, suddenly the power of God came upon us all. Conviction was general; there were cries for mercy in every direction. I never was able to preserve greater order, and yet not fewer than thirty persons were set at liberty. This work continued about two hours, and I never witnessed greater glory. I have seen a number saved the last week in different places, and I hope the work will go on; for, I do assure you, we need it at Newcastle and in the circuit. Pray, pray, and may the Lord hear you! Amen!

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER LXVI.

To Mr. Turnell.

"Newcastle, 1815.

"My Dear Brother,—I still find a strong inducement to continue our correspondence; and this, I trust, in the name of the Lord Jesus. The frequent changes and many deaths of our dear friends, ever call upon me to use the utmost diligence to grow in grace, to be ready, fully ready to meet God. I frequently long for his coming. I wait to see him as he is, to behold his glory, to see the company, and especially the number I have known, and who are now with him. What is all the world, or worlds on worlds to compare with this? What is labor? What is suffering? What are fire and water, (supposing we were called to pass through them,) if God is with us? To see the Lamb and possess everlasting life, overbalance every thing else.

"My wife is much better, but not well. She may still increase in strength.

"We have seen a blessed work of God, but seem rather at a stand again. Yet it may break out with greater power, and I hope it will. Numbers have been saved. The glory which has been revealed in different parts of this kingdom, should make us all rejoice. 'The Lord ride on, till all be subdued!' You will find our state of finance truly deplorable. O that the time may come when no circuit shall have more preachers than they will maintain! I shall then leave you in peace.

"How are you in your own mind? Do you keep clear in entire sanctification? Do you grow? Do you pray still more and more, and with greater pleading? Are you all alive, nothing quenching, the heart all love?

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The reader will perceive by these extracts from Mr. Bramwell's correspondence, that he was led constantly to look for his change. The happy saint was gradually ripening for glory, and his conversation was more eminently in heaven. The subjoined letter to his daughter, shows this still more plainly. He had received a secret intimation, that his earthly course might be terminated in Newcastle. In anticipation of this event, he could joyfully say, "Thy will be done."

LETTER XLVII.

To his Daughter.

"Newcastle, 1815.

"My Dear Ann,—It is long since we heard from you, and I suppose you will say the same respecting us. I hope you will unite in praise to

God, when I tell you that I have received what I call *an extraordinary baptism of the Spirit.* I do not know that I shall preach any better, or look in any thing more like an angel; but my soul has experienced such a fellowship with God and heavenly things, as I never felt before. O the glory which shall be revealed! I am swallowed up in him!

"When I first came to Newcastle I had, as I thought, reason to believe that I should be taken home from this place. The impression was such as made me speak of it to a few friends. In this I look up, and must say, 'Thy will be done!' May I be ready every moment!

"Three weeks ago your mother had a serious relapse, being very ill indeed; since then she has recovered in a remarkable way. In her last sickness, by looking to God in prayer, I thought I received an evidence that she would recover from that time. So far I am correct: the Lord can heal. We are doing well in the circuit. God is with us; but we wait for a much greater shower. Now, my dear Ann, live to God. Rest in nothing short of a clean heart: plead for this several times in a day. Believe: God must cleanse according to his word. Amen! The Lord grant it!

"I am your affectionate father,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER LXVIII.

To Mrs Pickford.

"Newcastle, 1816.

"*My Dear Sister,*—I received your letters; and the last to me were better than the first, because you point out your superior state as it respects your union with the Lord. Salvation is come to your heart indeed. 'Love casts out fear; as he is, so are you in this world.' As he is separated, so are you separated from a world of evil. This gives you boldness in looking at the day of judgment, a clear witness, a clear view of God, of heaven. O what satisfaction it yields to the soul! I am certain much is bought for us. I am equally certain all is promised to us and that he cannot fail to give this great salvation. He justifies, he purifies, he then stays the mind on himself; but he gathers us nearer, and still nearer, till we feel we live in the presence of God every moment. This is our place, and this is heaven upon earth. Whether poor or rich, in company or without, with our near relations or in their absence, the Lord is every thing to us, and every place is full of himself. We want no other heaven; we have all, and our God is this all. I long to see my particular friends, my relations, my brothers and sisters throughout the churches, live in this glory. Amen.

"I am certain you will in some way or other meet with tribulation; various changes will take place in this world in your family, and with

yourself; (for we are not yet settled;) but you will be ready to meet every change by constant watching and prayer, and by keeping up a lively faith in God. Never expect your heavenly Father to keep his covenant only on the ground of your acts of faith. This faith must be like the pendulum of a clock,—it must be kept moving, to put the whole soul in motion. And, as your faith increases, you will more quickly mount up, run faster, labor more, rejoice more, and drink the cup with greater cheerfulness.—You will be more thankful for every blessing for your situation, connections, and the instruments of your salvation. You will be more thankful for your dear, dear Mrs. Mortimer. Why did the Lord cast your lot so near her? Was it not that you might have 'fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore?' Was it not that you might arrive at all the fulness of God? O praise him for ever. I congratulate you, I rejoice with you, I triumph in union with you. I find this most sweet and pure. God is in our fellowship. It will not be broken. It is from heaven, and altogether spiritual. It will increase to eternity. I long much to feel what it will be, when separated from this vile body. I never had more pleasant walks, by faith, in the heavenly country. I see the company, and I live among them; for we are come to an innumerable company of angels; to the spirits of just men made perfect.' The manner is inexpressible, but the thing is certain. Faith is the evidence. Farewell! The everlasting God be with you always!

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

In the following letter we have a striking proof of the sincere and faithful friend:—

LETTER LXIX.

To Mr. Thomas Crowther.

"Newcastle, June, 1816

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Notwithstanding my long silence, my soul is ever toward you. Gomersal and the circuit are near my heart. My prayer to God for you all is that you may still be saved, and above all things, prosper in your souls. I think I never felt a greater longing for the salvation of the Churches, and of the world; and never so fully satisfied that it is God that 'worketh all in all.' I am giving myself to God, to receive a much deeper pabtism, which I feel is my liberty in this world. I cannot rest in sins forgiven, or in being cleansed from all unrighteousness. I see the glory which belongs to me in our blessed Lord, is for himself to dwell fully in my soul. I will praise him, I do praise him. But O my little faith! I must go, I must live with him for ever. Amen!

"My wife is much established, but not quite clear of the disease. She has occasionally slight relapses. Perhaps she will not be sound till she recives the new glorious body. May she pray always, and never faint. We are doing well, but the work is not general. All around us are in tribulation. God only knows when the general conflict will be passed. God is in many places pouring out his flood of mercy even in troublous times. England has surely had a great day of heavenly visitation. It has been exalted to heaven. The Lord grant that it may not be cast down to hell! I hope the ever blessed God will continue to show you his glory. O that the preachers, leaders, and all the societies may be alive to God.

"I trembled for you when I heard of your mission feast, &c. &c. I much feared you would be flushed with outward appearances, and look into the feast room, and be greatly encumbered, and sink down into the cellar with a load of worldly glory. My dear Crowther, excuse me I thought you were proof against these things; but you and I show ourselves to be but men. The Lord save us! And may we sit together in glory!

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Bramwell's appointment to Salford — His zealous labors — Declining health — Letters.

WE now enter on the last circuit, in which this faithful servant of Christ Jesus was permitted to labor. The conference appointed him to Salford in 1817. From all the accounts of those who were favored with his presence, it appears that he was fully persuaded that his work was nearly finished, and that the time of his departure was at hand. Few Christian ministers have had more intimate communion with God, or have evinced greater portion of self-dedication than Mr. Bramwell. His heavenly conversation and zealous exertions in the cause of his Divine master are thus described by Mr. James Grime: —

"Lamenting with others the loss sustained by the removal of one so eminently useful among us, as the late Mr. Bramwell was, I have found my mind thrown back upon the events of the year which has past, in order to collect a few of the fragments which remain in my remembrance, of the labors of a man endeared to us by the consciousness we had of his being, like Abraham, 'the friend of God,' a man mighty in faith, strong in prayer, enjoying constant union and communion with God. O! that not a look, nor a word of so good a man, may fall to the ground!

May God make the memoir about to be published a blessing to every reader!

"At the time when Mr. Bramwell was appointed to this circuit, we had petioned for him seventeen years; and at length we obtained our wishes. The expectation which had been formed was not disappointed. In his first address, he stated the duties of ministers of the Gospel, and his determination to labor after that model. 'I shall call upon you,' he said, 'not to eat, drink, or spend the time in conversation with you upon indifferent subjects, but ask you concerning the state of your souls.'

"His method of preaching was peculiar to himself. For sometimes he made choice of very singular passages from the prophets. Notwithstanding which, before he had finished, they were made very plain to the understanding. The metaphors of the inspired penmen were also applied in a remarkable manner to every individual, either as a private character, or as a member of a Christian community. Whoever remembers the following texts out of many others, will already have made the same remarks: Isa. vi, 1, 5: Isa. xliii, 1, 2; Isa. li, 9, 11; Isa. liii, 1, 2; Isa. lviii, 11, 12; Isa. lxii, 10, 12; Jer. xiv, 7, 9; Lam. iii, 31, 39.

"On one occasion Mr. Atmore said, 'None but Mr. Bramwell could have preached from such a text.' One idea generally prevailed in some mode or other, and formed the basis of almost all his discourses — that every Christian man should stand in his place, filled with the Spirit of God, and thus be qualified for the performance of every duty.

"How powerful was his call! 'Preachers! leaders! prayer leaders, and people!' and sometimes his zeal was so great that not an office of any kind escaped his notice. 'Singers and door keepers!' resounded through the chapel. So impressive were his calls to enter into the fulness of every Gospel privilege, that every head has often been bowed down, and hundreds pricked to the heart.

"According to his own account, he seldom ascended the pulpit without strong conflicts. Perhaps his soul had been wrestling with God in mighty prayer, that the glory of the Redeemer might appear. But the nature of those conflicts he never mentioned. When, however, he had entered upon his duty, and sometimes even as he entered the pulpit, his soul became unburdened; in the midst of his sermon he would obtain full liberty. Enraptured with the glories of heaven, and filled with holy fervor and zeal, he would lose sight of his presence in the body. At such seasons the Spirit's influences were shed abroad; and if there was a heart that felt not, surely that heart was hardened by wilful prejudice, or had become a willing captive to a Laodicean spirit. The inhabitants of Manchester, Salford, and Pendleton, remember many of those seasons, with a mixture of the most exalted feelings. Those of Barton will never forget the last love-feast which Mr. Bramwell held among them, when upward of thirty souls were set at liberty. On that

occasion he informed me that for nearly two hours he did not know whether he was in the body or not. The fervor of his spirit often led him into an involuntary poetic strain, little inferior to those celebrated compositions which have given immortal honor to the name of Dr. Young. I did indeed think that he had composed some piece which described the warfare and triumph of a Christian, and that at these times he was generally quoting himself. This mode of delivery was of frequent occurrence.

"He usually met the society after preaching on a Sunday evening, when that holy fervor which he had felt during preaching was far from being evaporated. He appeared unwilling to leave his post: 'Suffer me, suffer me,' he would often repeat. During preaching also, he used the same expressions, as well as 'Bear with me, O bear with me!' so importunate was he, and yet so feeling! and as often he returned to the charge. In the midst of the closing benediction, he has frequently resumed singing, with *Praise God from whom all blessings flow! &c.;* when the chapel, instead of being emptied, has been filled with fresh incense. In short, if Mr. Bramwell had received at his first coming among us, a clear discovery of the particular time of his departure, he could not have labored with greater earnestness. On the Sabbath before he left us for conference, one of his texts was from Phil. ii, 8, 'For God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.' 'When he sees Pendleton coming up the mount of God,' according to his ardent prayer well remembered, 'and heaven's host resounds the news,' they can and will, and must bear testimony, 'how greatly he did long after them all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.'

"Whenever he met an old professor enjoying the love of God, and ready to depart, he would say, 'Well my friend, it cannot be long before you take possession of the kingdom. When you get there tell them who are already in heaven, I am following hard after you, and shall not be long.' 'I go,' said he, in one of his sermons, 'many times in a day to look over this estate of mine.' To a friend who said, *This is my birth day*, Mr. Bramwell replied, 'Well, if you live as long again wholly devoted to God, you will then become a holy man indeed.' The attainment of entire sanctification was what he would constantly impress upon the minds of all who entered into conversation with him. Too many, he feared, are only outward court worshippers, when it is their privilege to enter into the holy of holies.

"To live dead to the world, and ever prepared for a dying hour, was his constant subject. This he would enforce by many familiar similes. 'If,' said he, 'the call should be at midnight, can you arise and at once willingly and cheerfully obey the summons? if at noonday, are you ready? Is every thing in its place? Can you obey with the same alacrity with which you would run to the door upon hearing a loud rap?

Or is there something to be set in order, before the call can be attended to?' He also observed that, if not both willing and ready in every moment of time to attend the summons of death, we were not fit to die. Preaching and conversing after this manner, his appointed time at length arrived, and as he had taught so he had learned to obey. The almighty and all-wise Disposer of events was well pleased; and impressed the whole with the broad seal of Divine approbation, saying, *come up hither!* and he was suddenly from earth released.

"The week before Mr. Bramwell went to conference he called at a friend's house in the afternoon; and, during his short stay, he prayed not less than six times, with uncommon earnestness, and in reference to some particular circumstance: whatever that might be, he was enabled between the intervals of prayer to praise God with equal fervor. His knowledge of the human heart was so deep, that it has been emphatically said of him, he was truly a discerner of spirits. Many examples might be given if living well-known characters were not implicated. With the pious and learned archbishop of Cambray, he knew, 'there was a simplicity which is a wonderful virtue;' of this virtue he was in full possession. He was a recollected soul. He was never absent, except when, with uplifted eyes, he looked at his estate; and this he could not avoid, even in the midst of company. He often lamented that Mr. Fletcher's letter on recollection was not more generally known.—Of the reverse of this state he was accustomed to observe, that it was a dissipation of mind and of soul. He frequently said, 'I feel as if I could like to go to heaven next week.'

"His familiar anecdotes and similes were made uncommon blessings. At a meeting of the society at Pendleton, he noticed many of the hindrances which prevented God from taking full possession of the soul. These he considered as idols. He gave an account of a canary fancier, —a professor of religion, but a mourner in Zion. Mr. Bramwell having seen the birds, and heard a description of their various beauties and excellencies, observed to the man, 'Why these are your gods!' The man was offended; but upon serious consideration, he felt the force of the remark, cut off the heads of all the poor canaries, applied to a throne of grace, and his soul was almost immediately set at liberty. At the same meeting another bird fancier felt the force of this remark, and instantly disposed of his birds; and although he was then in perfect health, he sickened soon afterward, and within the space of fourteen days after the meeting, died happy, triumphantly happy in the love of God."

The letters which Mr. Bramwell addressed from Manchester to his various friends, increase in interest as he approached nearer to that country, the inhabitants of which have no need to say, "I am sick."

LETTER LXX.

To his Daughter.

"Manchester, 1817.

My Dear Ann,—Having an opportunity of writing, by a friend, I am led to say that we are in a prospereus state. I do think your mother and myself never lived so near to God, and I hope we shall still increase in that blessed union.

* * * * * *

"I have you much on my mind, with your dear John. How is the work of salvation going on? Are you given to prayer? Have you confidence in God, that he can cleanse from all sin? Do you believe he is willing? Do you seek it by faith alone? Do you plead and bring it to the present time? Are you quite determined to receive it, or to perish crying out? Do you thus strive to enter in? Do you live in the daily sacrifice of yourself and children to God? O how I long for your full salvation, your living in God always, receiving all in union with Christ your being one with him! Do let me hear in your next, (and let it be by the return of the bearer,) that the Lord is come, that he hath cleansed your heart, that you can witness without fear, of the perfect love. O cry, cry to God mightily! Never rest till pure within. I pray daily for you. Do let me have an answer from God. Let me have my Ann and John to live in this salvation before I die! Let me see this fruit in my Ann. If you knew my concern, surely you would, even on this account, pray without ceasing, 'I will not let thee go, I will not, till my suit prevail.' From this time I will myself look up, and I will look for your answer to my satisfaction. I shall then return my God most hearty thanks for you. I will kneel down and give him glory. Our love to all in the house. The Lord bless and reward you all a hundred fold. Our love also to Dr. Taft. Your dear father,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The subjoined letter, to an old friend and beloved yoke fellow, is most affecting: —

LETTER LXXI.

To Mr. Roger Crane.

"Manchester, September 3, 1817.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Since my last rheumatic attack, my right hand has continued contracted, so that I find a difficulty in writing; but I am sure it is high time to answer your very affectionate letter. I can assure you it had such an effect on my mind that it laid me in the dust with tears. O my brother! we have passed through much tribulation, but the Lord has wonderfully preserved us from falling. I am lost in astonishment when I look to our former and past acquaintance. It is by

the mighty power of God that I continue. O how near have I been at various times, how near being overcome! But an alarm has been sounded in my ears, and I have been snatched as a brand from the burning. You will unite in praises to Him who has preserved me in justification, in sanctification, in love, in union with my God,—living in his presence, and waiting for my change. I have had to do with all sorts of persons, with extreme afflictions, and with the face of devils; but all is love. This bears, believes, hopes, and endures; it never fails. I hunger, I thirst, I pray and believe. Yet all is of Him, never weaker, yet never so strong. O this full salvation! He bought it, he promised it, he imparts it. Glory, everlasting glory be to the Lamb of God!

"Forgive me when I say to you, my life is now prayer. I feel the need of this continually, and can only live in this duty. I hope you will join me in this, though absent in body. A little while and he will come. You and I will soon have done. Let us be ready, always ready, to meet our Lord. All is fixed for ever, when we leave this world. We can never alter afterward. May this sink deep into our hearts, and may we receive a full reward!

"Yours, truly,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXXII.

To Mr. Reay.

"Manchester, Nov. 6, 1817.

"*My Dear Friend and Brother,*—I have for some time expected a letter from you. I thought I would wait no longer, but make free to write, to inquire about all things, as I am greatly interested in the affairs of your family and circuit. We are much better in health than I expected. Indeed the Lord has been so gracious, that Mrs. Bramwell has been better than I have known for three years. Yet she has at times some forebodings of the return of the disease; but is hitherto saved. We have a good house, and but too well furnished. I have scarcely been a night in town or country but I have seen effects in the societies. I determined I would never preach without meeting the society, and God has owned me in this, in every place. I have crowds to preach to, especially in Salford. I have not seen a general increase from the world: I hope I shall see it. In a love-feast in the country on Sunday week, for about two hours there was a general work of God, when about twenty, at least, were truly saved. Glory rested upon us all. In the bands at Salford, have seen as many as seven or eight saved in a meeting. Full salvation, quite clear, is the order of the day. Praise the Lord! I do hope the work will reach the wicked; O may I see this as in former days. In entering into my own country, near my native place, you cannot conceive what a number of invitations I have had to

preach anniversary sermons, and school sermons, &c. &c. As it is my confirmed opinion that the cause of God is exceedingly suffering on the ground of such visits, I have given them all up. Give my love to all the preachers, and to the members of your society.

"Your ever affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER LXXIII.

To his Son.

"Salford, December 23, 1817.

"*My Dear John,*—I received your kind letter with love and praise to God our heavenly Father, that you are preserved in health, and I hope in stronger resolution to live to HIM who suffered for us!—You know that we are every moment dependent upon him for all things. 'We live, and move, and have our being in him.' Yet all is of God. To be clear in pardon for all our sins,—to be pure in heart,—to live in love, this is heaven on earth. What is all the world compared with this? We are easy, which way soever we look. All is calm. Eternity only increases our happiness; yea, even death has lost its sting: all is joy, and the utmost delight. To live in profession is so far well. But to enjoy the kingdom—to live in God,—to have union with him,—to bear his image,—to glorify our God,—and finish the work,—this is our grand business on earth.

"I never had so strong a desire that you may live for eternal glory. I pray for it continually. I am with you sleeping and waking. O let me be with you for ever! If you give yourself to pleading prayer, all will be done; especially if you come to God through the Mediator, all will be given you. Be importunate, and say, 'I will not let thee go.' To be great in this world is nothing; but to be great in the sight of Jehovah,—to be proclaimed in heaven as great,—to be crowned with glory and had in everlasting remembrance with God,—to unite with me in contemplating the Divine perfections,—and to stand before the throne,—how glorious! O the company! the enjoyment! the duration! I am lost in wonder and astonishment: the foretaste of that meeting ravishes my soul. I long for that situation; ALL immediately, and to all eternity. Praise him, O ye angels! ye saints of God! ye glorified!

"Yours affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The two following extracts of letters to his son show that he received warning of his work being nearly finished, and contemplated the termination with holy composure;

To the same.

"Charles-street, Manchester, January 15, 1818.

"I am very well at present, but I feel infirmities coming upon me, and have serious thoughts of giving up travelling the next conference."

* * * * * * * *

To the same.

Manchester, April 21, 1818.

"I have not made public my present state of infirmity, (I mean the asthma,) which becomes troublesome to me in every capacity. I have not made known to any person, except * * * *, my intention of giving up itinerancy. If the Lord see it good, he can lay me aside. I shall know what to do. I believe he will direct me. I never had greater liberty in preaching, and never was more blessed. The will of God be done!"

LETTER LXXIV.

To Mr. Zechariah Taft.

"Manchester, April 27, 1818.

"*My Dear Brother,*— It has been some time on my mind to send you a friendly letter, to speak of my situation, and to request an answer. I am more than ever given to prayer, and enjoy much more friendship with my God. I feel a great desire to be in glory. To be cleansed from sin is great; but to be filled with God is much greater. O may I depend upon him for every thing, for time and for eternity! Amen, Lord Jesus!

"When I came to this circuit, I found I must carry heavy weights; and have had to carry them in much silence, and, I hope, with some patience. I want to be as the Lamb, 'dumb before the shearers.' In two love-feasts, I have seen a glorious work: in each, twenty souls were brought to God. I see crowded congregations, and some hundreds have been added. As a vast number of children were taken in before I came, numbers have gone back to the world. Young persons should never be in society without a real work of grace: I hope ever to abide by this discipline.

"I again tremble for the connection; temporals are in a ruinous state. What can be done? All are fast again. Wales is awful.

"My wife has been dangerously ill, but is greatly recovered. I am your affectionate brother,

WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER LXXV.

To Mr. Reay.

"Manchester, May 11, 1818.

"*My Dear Brother,*—I have this day received your letter. It has been my expectation that you would frequently hear of us by son George. That, and my waiting to find, if possible, a time for coming to see you, prevented me writing sooner: this is the true cause. I am glad for the salvation you have lately experienced; you are spared to increased in the love of God. Let it be your grand business to receive a full reward. We are exceedingly liable, as preachers, to lose ourselves in outward business; I mean in means, forms, &c.; and you are liable to lose yourself in worldly business, and not to do all things with an eye to God, which will prevent the close fellowship, the heaven of loving God alone. I could write it twenty times over to you, that it is continual prayer, with strong faith, which will produce every effect. You know how many slide back in the necessary ordinances. Some by improper hearing, some by improper prayers; some in singing; some in teaching; many in sacraments. The eye is taken from God, and a want of power runs through all the means. Hence we are neither cold nor hot. O my dear Reay, be alive, be a man of God, be in the spirit, be a flame of heavenly fire. Burn, yea, burn for God and for souls. I know your station; I know you will be shot at. I know every plan will be used to ruin you. Be all on your watch. Suspect every thing that does not present the meek and lowly Jesus. Have nothing but what he holds forth to you. Receive all by Christ, and from Christ. Be satisfied in having him for your all. Be clear in full salvation, without a doubt. You will then produce deep convictions in others. I want you to live fully, to live for ever, to live in all the glory, and to be changed into it more and more. The Lord seal these things upon your heart! Amen! If I could take hold of your hand, it would be the highest gratification to me in Christ Jesus. I am receiving more love; it comes by drops after agony of prayer. My soul becomes less than ever; but God is all I want, at all times. I have been astonished at the power I have received in preaching, and at some effects. God is yet with us indeed. Give my love to your class and to the society.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXXVI.

To Mr. Turnell.

"Manchester, June 12, 1813.

"*My Dear Brother,*—I waited long, expecting a letter from you; but when I received it I was glad to hear of the goodness of God to you

and yours. Salvation is from the Lord, and we will ascribe all the glory to him. He is worthy. I never was so much taken up with the Divine perfections as at the present time. To dwell in God is our place while on the earth; and this is perpetuated by acts of faith. Faith realizes the glory: for though we cannot see, yet we see all things in believing, make all that he is our own, and feel all the happy effects on the mind. Thus faith changes us more and more, we are taken up in the fullest union,—'hid with Christ in God,' ready, and always waiting to leave this body, 'that we may be clothed upon with our house in heaven.' Glorious company! Glorious place! I long, I wait for his coming. Come, Lord Jesus! come quickly! Amen.

"We live in Manchester, in which place we have about six hundred members belonging to Salford circuit. I have seen numbers saved since I came. Many have received full salvation, and live in clear liberty. Many are in distress in temporal things. Wages are exceedingly low, so that numbers have little more than half meat. It is said that things will mend; for this I pray, because the sympathy is sometimes too great for flesh and blood. 'Father, thy will be done!' 'Yet if possible, let this cup pass from us.' My wife has had her health much better lately, and for this we will praise the Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul! My brother Turnell, there is a dark cloud hangs over the connection, as it respects temporal matters. Collections are becoming so numerous, Methodists are engaged in so many new things, that it requires great and too great exertion to accomplish our own money matters. We are all upon the rack, and religion is now too much swallowed up in other concerns. I tremble for Zion. Can we return to our simplicity? Is it possible?

"I am your very affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXXVII

To his Son.

Manchester, July 2, 1818.

"My Dear John,—Believe me, I am more concerned than ever for your eternal welfare; for I have lately been much impressed with these words, 'I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.' I long to say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.' The heavenly world is more than ever in my view. O the change, the glorious change which must then take place! I feel a considerable degree of asthma, and although I labor to keep it from public view, yet I have found it sometimes very difficult.

"Your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXXVIII.

To Mrs. Reay.

"Manchester, July 16, 1818.

"My Dear Sister, — Your frequent indisposition may have appeared mysterious, both to you and to your dear husband, as many of God's works do to us in our present state of existence; and yet we may with the utmost confidence pronounce his doings in infinite wisdom. It will be to your utmost satisfaction to continue in this view and feeling of his proceedings. I more than ever wonder at his working; but can follow every wheel with a shout of 'Glory!' Well might the morning stars sing together, and all the sons of God shout for joy! He has done all things well. Your salvation from indwelling evil, I hope, is complete, — your receiving the witness of the all-cleansing blood, — your being made perfect in love, — your dwelling in God and God in you. Then there is no torment, no dread of death, eternity, judgment, &c. This view makes all calm, and fills the soul with divine consolation. It is heaven! Happy, happy spirit! thy guilt is removed and the soul is filled with God. Every thing within, without, around, above, beneath, increases the smile. What is pain? All is God, and God is all.

"I should be excedingly glad to see you before your flight; for it may be suddenly. Your poor flesh can only bear a little, very little; but I suppose you have no objection. Well, the will of God be done! Remember where you are going. I cannot think of it without desire without joy. O the numbers that are waiting for us! Will not the next meeting swallow up all sorrow of parting? Yea, for ever, for ever. Look up, you will shortly be crowned with immortality, with eternal life. Yet I am confident that we cannot detach any place from God's presence from the whole. If so, his glory is here, at Carville, the same as in heaven. And we may live in that glory here. Faith brings it in, and increases it even so much that we feel changed into it more and more I now live in this glory more than ever, and am waiting to meet you, to receive my glorious body, that we may see face to face what we all now, are only able to see by faith. The change will astonish us, will astonish all the saints in glory. We ought to do nothing in this world, but as a help to this glory; and if we esteem any thing, merely to serve the body, to the injury of the soul, we thereby prove that we prefer the body to the soul. The Lord be with you in affliction, in health, if permitted,) in life and in death. Amen, and Amen!

"I am your affectionate friend and brother

"Wm. Bramwell."

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Bramwell's arrival at Leeds — His attendance on the business of conference — His conversation, preaching, and the circumstances of his death — His funeral.

The writer of this memoir is indebted to a friend for the following account of Mr. Bramwell's short residence in Leeds, a subject, the recollection of which will long excite the most powerful sympathies in the minds of those who were concerned in the affecting closing scene :—

"Mr. Bramwell's last journey commenced on the 28th day of July, in the year 1818. On the morning of that day, he took a place in the Manchester coach, and proceeded to the house of his affectionate friend, Mr. Sigston, of QueenSquare, Leeds, his usual place of abode whenever his duty called him to sojourn in that town, or to pass through it. His host and hostess possessed views and feelings congenial to his own, being warm admirers of his piety, and imitators of that zeal and devotedness for which he was greatly distinguished. In their society he always appeared to be at home; and those happy, edifying interviews which many religious friends enjoyed with him in Mr. Sigston's house, will never be erased from their recollection.

"It was on the evening of the same day, that he arrived at this favorite abode. He came there for the purpose of attending on his duties in conference, which was held that year at Leeds. The series of letters presented to the reader, will have evinced the solicitude which, as a Methodist minister, he uniformly felt for the affairs of the connection. The financial embarrassments under which the body had been laboring for some years, were lamented by him, because he thought they might, in a great measure, have been avoided; and they were a farther subject of grief to him on account of their being real hinderances to the planting of the gospel in others places. Economy in expenditure, and less of woldly show and costly ornament in our places of public worship, were at once the preventives and the cures which he prescribed for this malady. But his great concern was not about outward things; he thought much and deeply about the inward declension which he feared was too perceptible in the modern race of Methodists. He longed to see the restoration of all that ancient simplicity, that genuine attachment to the Redeemer, and that unaffected charity for all men which were the characteristics of the early professors. These circumstances, connected with the temporal and spiritual prosperity of Methodism, compelled him to a close attendance during the sittings of conference, that he might hear every thing which was suggested for the mitigation of existing evils, and that he might contribute his portion of advice, which he always gave with modesty and firmness.

"In the intervals between each of the sittings, he enjoyed himself at his friend's house in conversation that was at once exhilarating and profitable. At such moments he shone as the enlightened minister and the pleasing companion. His presence communicated both delight and edification; and it is the declaration of his host, that if Mr. Bramwell had previously received a sure intimation that his earthly existence would terminate so soon and suddenly as it has done, he could not have conducted himself with more of that dignified propriety, and innocent cheerfulness, which become a minister of grace, and an heir of heaven. Indeed, this had always been his character, when in former times he had passed many happy days at Mr. Sigston's house: but it was the more remarkable at this period, for 'his conversation was eminently in heaven, from whence he was looking for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.' All his sayings appeared to possess a Divine power. Such a mature strength of zeal, tempered with Christian affability and gentleness, has seldom been witnessed. He was 'filled with the Spirit;' and exhibited to the view of all around him a heavenly specimen of a finished character. One of his brethren, who sat near him during the whole conference, the business of which was often of a very trying description, has said that Mr. Bramwell appeared constantly to act and live under a lively conviction of these words, 'Thou God, seest me!'

"One afternoon during the conference, he took tea with his old friend, Mr. Baiston, in company with several other preachers. In the course of conversation, it was observed how difficult it was to station those preachers who had large families. Mr. Bramwell said, with much solemity, 'I think some of us ought to pray that God would be pleased soon to grant us a station in heaven!'

"A few days before he died, clasping his hands together, and lifting his eyes to heaven, he said, 'O the blessed state of that man of God, Mr. Blagborne, when he was about to depart! I saw him in London a short time prior to his death, when he exclaimed with great joy Glory, glory be to God, who hath made me fully ready for my change!

"A friend calling upon him one day, inquired where his station for the following year was fixed. Mr. Bramwell replied, My brethren have appointed me to return to Salford. But I tell them they will never have another opportunity to give me an earthly station; for it is my intention to be in heaven before next conference. I am hastening to that better country as rapidly as I am able.'

"On one other occasion, an intimate friend meeting with him in the yard of the old chapel, walked with him and complimented him on his being chosen *chairman of the Manchester district*; adding, with an air of pleasantry, 'that he hoped his elevation would not turn his head. Mr. Bramwell smiled, and, without seeming to have heard a syllable of what had been uttered, fixed his eyes upon his friend, and said in a

very emphatic tone of voice, 'O brother live to God!' Immediately afterward his attention was called off by some other friends. This one object he had perpetually in sight—to exhort every one with whom he conversed, to prepare for the complete enjoyment of the inheritance of the saints in light. He could assure all his friends from his own experience, that nothing was so delightful as to live under a constant sense of God's presence, and to do all things with a regard to his glory.

"During his stay in Leeds, he preached a few times in the neighboring villages. On Sunday evening, August the 2d, he was at Woodhouse and delivered an affecting discourse from Phil. i, 8-10, 'For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge and in all judgment: that you may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence, till the day of Christ.' Little did his friends and the congregation suppose, when they heard his animated exhortation for the 'abounding of their love in knowledge and judgment,' that it would be the last time of their being favord with his faithful admonitions. He dilated much on 'the day of Christ,' and cried out with a fervency peculiar to himself 'My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that I may meet all my Yorkshire friends in glory!' He most affectionately entreated believers to wrestle and strive for the attainment of the great salvation. After the conclusion of the service, a prayer meeting was held; several zealous friends engaged in prayer, and Mr. Bramwell seemed to experience a kind of ecstatic delight in that season of social worship.

"Being only a few miles distant from Westgate Hill, the residence of his daughter, on Saturday, the eighth of August, he went to see her and the family, and preached in the village on Sunday afternoon, to a crowded congregation. His text was 1 John, iv, 16-18, 'And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.' His sermon was very experimental, and he urged all his hearers to press into this life of God,—the dwelling in love. He spoke in a powerful manner on the 'boldness' with which a believer is inspired through Christ, in the day of judgement; and in the course of his second prayer, he uttered these remarkable expressions, 'Lord, didst thou not this day speak to my heart, and say, *Thou shalt soon be with me to behold my glory?* A great number of friends afterwards took tea with him at the house of his daughter Hargreaves. He commenced an interresting conversation with them on the subject of prayer, in which he observed, 'The devil hates prayer; and if by any means he can prevail with us

either to neglect this duty, or to be less fervent in it, he gaines his purpose. Sometimes business will call off our attention, and we neglect it once in the day: at night we reflect on our folly, and lament our loss, resolving, if spared, to be more diligent on the morrow. We sometimes attend to the hours which we have set apart for the performance of this duty; but our hearts are not there, they are wandering to the ends of the earth. At other times we are conscious of having done some evil which causes us to be ashamed of appearing at the footstool of our heavenly Father. Thus by one means or another, Satan obtains his desire, and afterwards reproves us for it. But when we live in a habit of constant, fervent prayer, our grand enemy flies, and our souls prosper.' Mr. Clapham, one of the company, having risen to depart very early, Mr. Bramwell inquired why he was going so soon and being told that he had to preach at six o'clock at Drighlington, that evening, Mr. Bramwell took him by the hand, and, looking at him as though he was never to behold him again, said, 'May the Lord bless you, my brother Clapham!'

"One Monday evening, August the 10th, he went to Holbeck, and took tea at widow Clarke's, with Dr. Taft and Mr. Simpson. He had formerly shown a tender concern for the salvation of the pious widow's eldest son, and had exacted from him a solemn promise that he would endeavor to meet him in heaven. They afterwards covenanted together to pray for each other; and the youth continued to fulfil his part of the obligation till Mr. Bramwell's death, and remains to this day a steady member of society. He spent a very agreeable afternoon with the family, and the friends who had come to meet him. He prayed with them four or five times, and was very lively and zealous. Some of the friends asked him if the seven years had not expired which conference prescribes, before a preacher can be again appointed to a circuit in which he formerly travelled. 'Yes,' said the man of God, with a heavenly smile, 'but I feel as if my next appointment would be for heaven.' The same evening, at seven o'clock, he preached to an attentive and overflowing congregation, from Isaiah xliii, 1-3, 'But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior.' This was the last text which Mr. Bramwell was permitted to choose, and he spoke from it as a dying man to dying men. Great unction and power attended the word. Many were encouraged to trust yet more confidently in the promise of God, who had declared he would be with them when passing through the fire, and through the

water. Every person that heard him, remarked the solid grounds of comfort which in this discourse he held out to others, and entertained no doubt of his feeling their powerful influence on his own spirit, called as he was,so soon afterward, to ascertain their sufficiency in his personal experience. He prayed with uncommon fervor at the conclusion of the sermon; and in this manner terminated at Holbeck, the last of his public labors!

"On Wednesday in the same week, after attending the last sitting of conference a short time, he left his brethren about seven o'clock in the evening, and repaired to the house of his friend, that he might complete several little arrangements for his departure on the following morning. Mr. Sigston saw him come across the yard, and says that he advanced with a firm and agile step, like a young man in the bloom of health and buoyancy of spirits.

"That evening he expected the arrival of his son John by coach from Durham. When he had finished all his intended preparations, two young men were despatched into the town to await the arrival of the north coaches, which generally reach Leeds between nine and ten o'clock. On their return they informed Mr. Bramwell, that his son was not arrived, but that they had met with a gentleman at the coach who had seen Mr. Bramwell, jun. the Saturday preceding, and he had not intimated to him any intention of coming to Leeds. At this Mr. Bramwell seemed somewhat disappointed, till Mr. Sigston reminded him that he had heard him say his son would be in Leeds on Thursday evening, and that night was only Wednesday. He acknowledged that he had said this, and that Thursday was indeed the proper day for his son's arrival. He appeared much surprised at the mistake which he had made, and said, 'Dear, dear! of what have I been thinking?' His kind host then earnestly begged of him to remain a day longer; but he would not agree to do this, as he had previously promised his Salford friends that he would be with them on Thursday evening.

"During the remainder of the evening he was quite cheerful, and entered readily into conversation on various topics. Mr. William Dobson called to take leave of him. While the family were at supper, Mr. Bramwell made many spiritual remarks, and regretted that he had been prevented from seeing several of his Leeds friends, for whom he had formerly felt a great regard; he particularly mentioned Messrs. Benjamin and Michael Saddler. Immediately after supper, raising one hand, and looking upward, he said, with a pleasing smile on his countenance, 'It strikes me that one of us will be gone in three or four months.' On which Mrs. Sigston observed, 'If it should be Mr. Bramwell, we should say, Who could have thought it, as he looked so well at conference?' Mr. Bramwell then said, 'Several of my friends have died of apoplexy, and I expect to go in the same way.' Mrs. Sigston replied,

'Perhaps you desire such a mode of dying, Mr. Bramwell?' He smiled but made no reply. Mrs. Sigston rejoined, 'if such is your wish, the Lord will undoubtedly grant your request.' In a little time he prayed with the family, after which Mr. Dobson retired.

"Knowing that he intended to rise about half past two o'clock next morning, to go by the first coach to Manchester, Mr. Sigston endeavored to prevail on him to retire; but he said he could not till he had seen Mr. Nelson; who had promised to bring him an account of the termination of business in conference, about which he seemed to be much interested. As it was then late, Mrs. Sigston took her leave of him, and hinted that she would probably see him before he set off in the morning. But he particularly requested that she might not be disturbed at that early hour. He and Mr. Sigston, being then left alone, had much edifying conversation, at the close of which, Mr. Bramwell intimated a distant intention of sitting up all night, as it was then late. To this his friendly host objected, and pleasantly remarked, 'We must have no sitting up here!' They sat together some time longer on the sofa, till Mr. Nelson arrived, who took a little supper, and related very circumstantially to Mr. Bramwell all the final proceedings of conference. Mr. Nelson withdrew soon afterward; and when Mr. Bramwell had conversed a few minutes with his friend, he took the bed candlestick, which had been placed for him, bade farewell most affectionately to Mr. Sigston, and commended him to God with peculiar fervor. A servant sat up, who was directed to call him at half past two o'clock, and to provide him some comfortable refreshment before his departure.

"After he had entered his chamber, Mr. Johnson, one of the teachers who slept in the opposite room, heard him praying most fervently, and among other petitions, he recollects the following sentence, which was repeated several times, 'O Lord, prepare me for thy kingdom and take me to thyself!' Mr. Johnson was awakened again about two o'clock in the morning, by the fervent prayers of Mr. Bramwell, when he heard him frequently offering up this supplication, 'Lord, bless my soul and make me ready!' At half past two o'clock precisely, he came down stairs, without having been called, and took his coffee and bread and butter, with as good an appetite as usual. During the time of this early repast, he very often lifted up his hands and his eyes, and with great earnestness said, 'Praise the Lord! Glory be to God!' &c. He then said to the servant, 'We will pray a little.' They knelt down; and he prayed very fervently for himself, for her, and for the whole family beseeching God that she, as well as himself, might be fully ripened and made ready for heaven. After this she went to open the yard door, and he immediately followed her, shook hands with her, and said, 'The Lord bless you, Alice!' He departed; she locked the door after him, and returned into the house. This was about three o'clock and, before

she had time to undress herself, she heard some persons knocking at the yard door. She opened a window, and a man said to her, 'Has a gentleman left your house this morning?' She replied, 'Yes.' The man* then said, 'I believe he is dying in the lane.' She alarmed the family, several of the members of which instantly ran down into the lane. She also ran, shrieked, and kneeling down, said, 'Mr. Bramwell! Mr Bramwell!' She thought that he attempted to speak to her; but he was not able to articulate any thing distinctly. One of the patrole ran for a surgeon; the other, assisted by Mr. Sigston and his young men, conveyed him back to the house. A surgeon arrived in a few minutes afterward, but, alas! the vital spark was quiet extinct.

"So rapid was this transition from life to death, that the language which his friend, Mr. Henry Moore, employed on the occosion, appears very just and appropriate:—'We can scarcely call it death. It almost appears a transition.' Viewed in this light, while his unexpected removal from this state of suffering is regarded as a mysterious providence by his relations, and by the Church, it may be contemplated as an act of Divine mercy, as it respected himself. For of the pangs of dissolution he was almost unconscious,—and they were soon over.†

"It is impossible to give any adequate description of the sensation which the account of Mr. Bramwell's sudden death produced on the public mind. He had been long known and highly esteemed in Leeds and its vicinity, as an able champion in the cause of Christ; and the

*This person was James Ingham, one of the Leeds night patrole. He and his partner, Joseph Geldard, give the following account of this sudden catastrophe:

"We belong to the Leeds patrole. In the execution of our duty we were going up Woodhouse-lane a little before three o'clock. When we got to Mr. Bramwell, he was standing in a bending attitude, with his hands upon his knees. I (Ingraham) said, 'My good man? does something ail you?' He said, 'Yes, I am very ill indeed. Take hold of me, watch!' I immediately took hold of him on one side, and told my comrade to take hold of the other. I then asked him where he came from, and told him we would take him back again. He said, 'I came from Mr. Sigston's:' and on my asking where Mr. Sigston lived, he said, 'A little father up on the right hand.' I inquired of him if we might take him back again: he said, 'Yes, do, if you please.' But he took only one step from the ground, when he said he could go no father. He then stood in his former position, saying that he was the easiest in that posture. At last he fell upon his knees, and my partner took hold of him, and said to me, 'Be quick and tell Mr. Sigston.' Mr. Bramwell said, 'Yes, do, for I shall not be long here.' These were the last words which he spoke."

† On this topic, see Mr Dawson's very interesting sermon, preached soon after the mournful occurrence.

suddenness of his departure out of this world seemed to make every one more deeply sensible of those excellencies in his character and conduct, to which they had before done ample justice. For few preachers ever attracted larger or more attentive audiences; and what is very remarkable notwithstanding his uncommonly faithful admonitions, and his great plainness of speech, the ungodly part of mankind flocked to hear him in preference to a great number of his brethren in the ministry. This might be owing, in part, to the peculiar earnestness which distinguished his delivery in the pulpit, and which such persons regarded as a proof of the paramount impression produced on his own mind by the grand truths which he delivered to others.

"Many of his brethren, the preachers, had not left Leeds, the business of conference having only ended at a very late hour the preceding evening; and they testified, in every possible manner, their deep regret for the loss of such a faithful and affectionate fellow laborer. His relatives determined to have his remains removed from Leeds, and to deposit them in the burial ground at Westgate Hill. Friday afternoon was the time privately fixed upon for the intended removal. No notice was given of it, except to the remaining preachers, who had expressed a wish to show some public mark of respect for Mr. Bramwell's memory: yet an immense multitude of serious well-dressed people, of different religious denominations, had filled up a great part of Woodhouse lane, the road leading to Mr. Sigston's dwelling, some time prior to the hearse moving off with the body. As soon as it began to move from the house a procession was formed, as if from impulse, and without previous concert. The travelling preachers arranged themselves in pairs, according to seniority, and followed immediately after the body. It was a very affecting spectacle to behold such a number of venerable and aged ministers, succeeded by their vigorous younger brethren, all uniting by their presence to render due honor to the virtues of the deceased. Then followed, in the same order, a goodly company of the local preachers and leaders; and after them a promiscuous, but very respectable assemblage of private Christians. The number of attentive and deeply interested spectators that lined both sides of the road was immense: and before the procession had reached the top of Briggate, it had received a very considerable augmentation both of mourners and beholders, who extended from the top to nearly the middle of that fine street. Had any public intimation been given of the time when Mr. Bramwell's remains would be conveyed to Westgate Hill, the crowd would have been so great as to impede the free passage of the procession.

"In this solemn manner it moved till it arrived at the confines of Holbeck and Wortley, when after a very impressive prayer by Dr. Taft, the following appropriate verse was sung:

There all the ship's company meet,
Who sail'd with their Savior beneath;
With shouting each other they greet,
And triumph over trouble and death:
The voyage of life's at an end,
The mortal affliction is past;
The age that in heaven they spend,
For ever and ever shall last.

The company then separated, and the hearse conveyed the body to the place of its destination. It had been previously announced that the interment of Mr. Bramwell's remains would take place on the following Sunday.

"On Sunday the sixteenth of August, multitudes from all parts of the country repaired to Westgate Hill, to witness the funeral ceremony of their beloved friend and pastor. Several aged people came from some of the villages beyond Sheffield, and others from places equally distant.

"Mr. Highfield preached in the area adjoining the chapel, to an overwhelming congregation, from Mathew, xxiv, 44, 'Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. The body was then committed to the silent grave, amidst the sincere lamentations of many thousands present. Immediately afterward, Mr Nelson and Dr. Taft delivered very solemn and appropriate addresses to the deeply affected multitude.

"This solemn event was improved, the same Sunday evening, in all the three Methodist chapels in Leeds, and in many of the adjoining circuits; and on the fourteenth of September, a funeral sermon was preached by Mr. William Dawson, in the area in front of Mr. Sigston's school, and near the place where Mr. Bramwell died. Nearly ten thousand persons were assembled that afternoon, and listened with almost breathless attention to the admirable discourse of this engaging preacher.*

"A plain tablet, bearing the following neat and unassuming inscription, has been erected to his memory in the burial ground at Westgate Hill:

HERE LIETH WHAT WAS EARTHLY
Of the venerable
WILLIAM BRAMWELL,
A chosen, approved, and valiant minister of Christ,
Who died August 13, A. D. 1818, aged 59.
Stranger! when thou approachest this shrine
Consecrated to his memory
By an afflicted family,
May his ashes still proclaim, what he lived
To publish,
'Prepare to meet thy God.'"

* This discourse was soon after published by particular request.

CHAPTER XVI.

A remarkable dream in reference to Mr. Bramwell — Mr. Ward's brief character of him.

It was the original intention of the author of this memoir to have inserted, in this place, a comprehensive view of the late Mr. Bramwell's character. But a detailed character of Mr. Bramwell seems the less necessary in this place, because each of the friends who contributed to the preceding account has given his own view of particular traits in it which are correct and edifying.

It has, however, been thought proper to subjoin the following remarkable dream, which was related to the author by Mr. Henshaw, on the morning of Mr. Bramwell's decease. When Mr. Henshaw returned to his circuit, he was requested to furnish a statement of it, which he did in the following terms:

"I shall never forget the affecting scene which occurred on the morning after the last conference closed. Passing by your door a few minutes before six o'clock, from the house of my hospitable friend, Mr. W. Smith, it was announced to me that Mr. Bramwell was dead. Overwhelmed with this unexpected and most afflictive intelligence, and scarcely thinking it could possibly be true, I entered the parlor, where I saw the body of my friend laid on the sofa, clothed as usual, with a pillow under his head, — his eyes closed, his body warm, and his features then as perfectly composed as if he had been in a sweet sleep,—only 'he breathed not.' Being left alone in the room with him for some time, I had sensations of holy delight, peculiar and indescribable. — Never before did death to me so appear disarmed of terror; never did the veil which hides the blessedness of eternity from our view, seem so thin. I seemed to enjoy the sweetest fellowship with his happy spirit, and wished myself in his stead. His faithful, piercing sermons, his fervent prayers, his holy example, his heavenly converse, and the interviews of past years, rushed on my recollection with uncommon force: and then I saw the career of his useful labor and of his life, thus easily and happily finished together. I saw also, by faith, the beginning of his glorious triumphant state, which should continue for ever; and if a wish would have brought him from the skies, to tabernacle again in this abode of darkness, pain, and death I could not have offered it. As God had said to Moses, 'Get thee up into this mountain and die,' so he seemed to have said to this holy man 'Thy work is done; leave the house of thy friend, and enter into the joy of thy Lord.' The behest was obeyed; and dropping the shreds of mortality, he entered into glory.

"His death brought to my remembrance a dream that I had above twenty years ago. I related it to you; and it seems you then thought it

so remarkable, from the reference made in it to Mr. Bramwell, as to request a written account of it. With this request I find great difficulty in complying. Dreams in general are such odd fantastic things, that they who much regard them are justly contemned. Some dreams are however, unquestionably Divine; and many others may be related to a few friends by the fireside, which it would not be proper to make public. To print a dream is a serious affair; I am therefore extremely doubtful as to the the propriety of the following appearing before the public, although the beneficial effect which it had upon my own mind at the time was considerable. I submit it, however, wholly to your judgment, as I write it solely at your request.

"I told you that soon after the death of that venerable minister, Mr. Thomas Hanby, in December, 1796, I was desired by the society in Nottingham to supply his lack of service in the circuit, until the time of conference.

"About three months after I had commenced this arduous task, one night, in a dream, I saw Mr. Wesley enter the house where I then was, dressed exactly as I had seen him in the pulpit. I thought I at once told him of the desire which I felt to devote myself to the service of the Lord, as an itinerant preacher in his connection. He rubbed his hands, and with affability expressed his approbation. As I had already hurt my health by loud and violent speaking, and had received from different persons very opposite directions relative to my mode of delivery in the pulpit, it occurred to me to ask the opinion of Mr. Wesley, 'Whether or not I should endeavor to continue that earnestness of manner in preaching with which I had commenced?' He said, 'You know the clergy in general adopt a cool and deliberate method of speaking, and do but little good. We must look upon ourselves as ministers called of God, out of the ordinary way, to awaken a sleepy world to a sense of sin and danger, and earnestly to direct all men to Christ: therefore labor hard in the pulpit.' I replied, 'But inasmuch as conversion can be effected only by the operation of the Spirit of God on the hearts of the people, may we not expect that operation as much when speaking in a cool and deliberate manner, as by the use of the utmost warmth and energy of expression?' He said, 'No. The Holy Spirit co-operates with the word when it is delivered in a warm and earnest manner, and makes it effectual to conversion; as witness William Bramwell, although many take him for an enthusiast.' He then directed me to read his own journals, and bade me farewell. When I awoke it was still night; and after musing a long time, I slept again, and thought I saw a friend, to whom I related, with great exactness, the interview which I had with Mr. Wesley in a dream, and with what benignity he had accepted of me as a preacher in his connection. On awakening a second time, I arose and wrote down these particulars.

"Soon after this period, Mr. Bramwell came on a visit to Nottingham, where I saw him for the first time, at the house of Mr. Tatham. After tea, at his request, we all prayed until the time of preaching. His text was, 1 Thess. i, 3, 'Your work of faith and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.' This sermon he preached, indeed, with great earnestness, and the Lord blessed the word. At a prayer meeting held in the chapel after preaching, several persons implored mercy aloud, and some obtained it. When he retired to rest, he spent a great part of the night in prayer. The next morning he called me up before four o'clock, and we read in the New Testament and prayed till five, at which hour a prayer meeting was held in Mr. Tatham's kitchen, according to notice given on the preceding evening. The room was crowded with people; and it proved a blessed season to many. The day was spent in heavenly conversation, and prayer, with different families. In the evening he preached again; the subject was sanctification, from 1 Thess. v, 23, 24. The word was spoken with great power; and some now living will remember it to this day. On the following morning he returned to Sheffield. It may well be supposed that the recollection of the dream, and the effect of this visit, would make a deep impression on my mind, and produce ever afterward an attentive observation of Mr. Bramwell's conduct. I hope therefore I may be allowed to say, that for genuine religious zeal, a deep spirit of devotion, power with God in prayer, self denial and deadness to the world,—for a laborious discharge of the general duties of the ministry, faithfulness in reproving sin, and sympathy with the afflicted,—for uniform and entire holiness of life and conversation, and successful efforts in the awakening and conversion of sinners, and in the building up of believers,—I have never seen his superior. May the mantle of this Elijah fall on many young Elishas!"

The author closes this memoir with the following brief tribute to several of Mr. Bramwell's excellencies, kindly communicated by Mr. Valentine Ward, who was his colleague in two different circuits:—

"My acquaintance with Mr. Bramwell commenced immediately after the conference in 1808, when he was appointed superintendent of the Liverpool circuit. After enjoying the privilege of travelling with him in that circuit, and having been separated one year, we had again the happiness of being fellow laborers and also next door neighbors.

"Nothing is more common than for erroneous opinions to be formed of celebrated men. Accordingly, I had involuntarily formed disadvantageous prepossessions concerning our departed friend, which a short acquantance entirely removed. In the first place I expected to find him a snarling cynic, a morose disturber of Christian cheerfulness, and an interrupter of the most innocent conversation. But what was he in fact? The happy man,—the kind, tender-harted friend,—attentive to

every person about him; and if more attentive to one than to another it was to the young or to any who were in danger of being overlooked. He was sufficiently severe to himself, but indulgent to others.

"Another particular in which I found myself mistaken concerning him, was, his conscientiously strict and firm adherence to discipline. The language of my fears, grounded on vague report, was, that however excellent he might be as a preacher, he would be very unfit to govern a large society, and that his management of discussions, and his decisions in our various official meetings, would be guided more by his own feelings than by rule. But never was any man's conduct more opposed to such a theory. 'Thus saith the law,' was his constant observation: 'we must not, will not go contrary to our rules.' And I am sure the conviction of his own mind was, that this is the most excellent way.

"No doubt, most or all of your correspondents who have travelled with him, will bear testimony to his diligence. He was a great economist of time. Rising early in the morning, he employed every hour of the day usefully, either in the duties of the closet, or in visiting the sick in body or soul; advising, comforting, or admonishing them as the occasion required. The love of immortal souls appeared to be a ruling passion in his heart. He had for many years been studying the soul's immense value, its unending duration, the infinite price paid to redeem it, its capacity for enjoyment, and the danger of its being miserable for ever. And having for so long a time pondered these things in his heart, his unconstrained language concerning sinners seemed always to be, 'If by any means I may gain some.' In reference to those already in the good way he could affirm, 'Now I live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.'

"He was not, as the words are commonly understood, a GREAT PREACHER. But if that man is the best physician who performs the most cures, that is the best preacher who is the instrument of bringing the greatest number of souls to God; and in this view Mr. Bramwell will be entitled to rank among the greatest and best of Christian ministers. Those who knew him, however, and were most competent to form a correct judgment concerning him, did not expect to hear from him what is called 'a finished discourse.' They were prepared to witness the total neglect of some modern popular rules of sermonizing. But they did expect to hear 'words of fire.' Some striking original observations occurred in all his sermons. Old truths of unspeakable value and importance, were delivered by him with an unction and an emphasis seldom equalled, and scarcely ever surpassed. Much might with propriety be said of his abhorrence of evil speaking, and of the faithful stand which he frequently made against this too common and fashionable vice. Often when an absent character has been attacked, he has said, 'Well, we cannot mend him by talking about him here; let us pray for him.' And sometimes he has risen from his seat, and

declared his determination to leave the house if this evil was persisted in.

"After all that may be said concerning his other qualities, nothing will be remembered by his numerous friends more readily, or for a longer period, than his spirit of prayer. He was indeed a man of God! His fluent, impressive, fervent and successful addresses to God in the pulpit, the parlor, and by the side of the sick bed,—with his sweet spirit of devotion, and his deep experience of the love of God,—marked him out as one who delighted to enter into his closet, and hold sweet communion with the Father of spirits."

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MEMOIR

OF THE

LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF

MR. WILLIAM BRAMWELL.

VOL. II.

CHAPTER XVII.

Introductory remarks.—Letters to Mr. Drake.

The pious reader who has been edified and instructed by the letters contained in the first volume of this Memoir, will peruse with an increase of pleasure the following continuation of Mr. Bramwell's correspondence.

Those letters which were addressed by this holy man to Mr. Joseph Drake, a faithful and zealous fellow-laborer with him in the vineyard of Christ, occupy the first place in this second volume; and, being many they are placed together in a series, that they may the better elucidate each other and certain parts of the preceding narrative.

To persons of wisdom and discernment it is scarcely necessary here to remark, that these letters having been written in the confidence of friendship, contain statements of many circumstances which Mr. Bramwell would not have divulged to the world; but as all of them have some relation to most excellent traits in his character, and tend to shew the strength of his zeal and the depth of his humility, they are allowed to retain their primitive aspect and designation, thus to assist in pourtraying the man, not merely what he was in appearance, but what he was in reality, what were the affections and inmost thoughts of his heart. Thus, if he had intended any part of his correspondence for publication, (which was an idea most alient to his mind,) he would have suppressed those sentences by which, in the hight of his exultation, some "brother beloved" was called upon to rejoice with him, because the dead was brought to life, the lost was found. Yet why should

such expressions be omitted, or, when inserted, be subjected to a sinister interpretation? Has the pious author, in any instance, evinced a want of modesty, in speaking of himself as one of the ready and obedient instruments of God in the great work of salvation? Has he not uniformly ascribed to God alone all the honor, praise, and glory, on account of the blessed effects which attended his ministry? And is not the attempt, on such joyful occasions, to impart this warmth of feeling to others, and to make them partakers of the same holy joy, an act in perfect accordance with the dictates of reason under the sanctifying influences of Divine grace? The sedulous woman in the gospel called her neighbors together, to rejoice with her when her piece of silver was found. Her conduct, the spontaneous impulse of nature, is mentioned with approbation in the word of God; and her diligence in searching is a virture recommended for our imitation, in reference to spiritual concerns. The Great Shepherd has likewise, by his own example, given a sanction to such undisguised pleasure and gladness of heart, when in the parable of the lost sheep, (which has a manifest relation to ministers of the gospel,) he teaches us under the similitude of a shepherd's transports on reclaiming a single straggler from his flock, that 'there is in like manner more joy in heaven over one sinner that *repenteth*, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance.' If therefore, the conversion of sinners heightens the happiness of Heaven, is it not perfectly natural for the servants of the Lord, even here, to exult in the triumphs of redeeming love? And were we to see ministers regarding such topics of grace with cold indifference and careless unconcern, would not the presumption be strictly legitimate, that such persons were mere pretenders, or, to use the appropriate words of our Savior, '*Wolves in Sheep's clothing*?'

But to those to whom the apostolic epistles are familiar writings, this chain of reasoning is unnecessary. The apostles of our Lord, in their admirable letters, abundantly exulted in the success of their ministry; and every servant of Christ, who acquits himself with fidelity in the discharge of this sacred trust, is entitled to indulge in the same ecstatic pleasure.

The early letters in this series describes the progress of religion in the Sheffield circuit, and are an admirable comment on the eight chapter of this work.—By the first letter it will be seen what were Mr. Bramwell's feelings when he found few members of the society making any profession of sanctification or aspiring after its enjoyment. Yet this letter expresses strong grounds for hope and encouragement. The fact related at the close of it, is only another testimony to the power of faithful prayer, and teaches us, (notwithstanding the taunts of those who ridicule all the acts of saving faith,) to expect such answers to all our petitions, when they are founded, as they ought always to be, on

the promises of our Heavenly father, and in a humble submission to his will.

"Leave to his sov'reign sway
To choose and to command;
So shalt thou wondering own his way,
How wise, how strong his hand!"

But, even concerning temporal affairs as well as spiritual blessings, the ancient charge may still be alleged against us with the greatest truth,—'Ye have not, because ye ask not, or because ye ask amiss.'

LETTER LXXIX.

To Mr. Drake.

"Sheffield, 1795.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I believe God has sent me here, but I cannot yet tell why. We have house, friends, and every thing that we want in this way:—yea, there is an uncommon sociability among the people, and apparently much plainness and simplicity. But real religion, the image of God, is every where much wanting. Ever since I came, I have been among the Derbyshire hills, except the first night of my arrival, when I preached in Sheffield. The societies in the fortnight-ride are small; and after diligent search, (for I have met the societies at every place,) I have not found one person that knows the virtue of Christ's cleansing blood. Yet there is great friendship; and, it appears I am received by the people with much respect. I have had the Lord with me this fortnight at several places. Almost every night there has been a shaking among the people; and I have seen nearly twenty set at liberty. I believe I should have seen many more, but I cannot yet find one pleading man. There are many good people; but I have found no wrestlers with God. At two or three small places, we had cries for mercy; and several were left in a state of deep distress.

"I return to-morrow, to stay a fortnight in Sheffield. My wife has been at all the meetings in the town whilst I have been out; but no work of God is visible. All is quiet: and, I believe, nearly all the people are peacible and kind. Indeed, there is every thing but depth of religion. They tell me there are at least three thousand hearers at the chapel on Sunday evenings. I see no cause for delay. I would, through God, do all as my last act; and, O I pray, that I may see his arm made bare in this place! I do bless God for going with me into the country,—and I hope he will be with me in the town.

"Dear Brother, I could love to see you soon—if it could be done without injury to our respective circuits: perhaps we can meet some where between them. After twelve hours' groaning, and using every means God hath opened blind eyes, and he hath also miraculously united dear H. to his people. I never saw the power of God more visibly

displayed; whatever may be the effect, it was God who produced it.

"A strange thing happened on the day when I got to Sheffield. At E——, a few miles from this place, a poor woman in our society, who has several children, and had been quiet blind six years, had her eyes instantly opened, and thanks for this great temporal mercy were offered to God in the public congregation at Sheffield. The manner in which it was effected was as follows;—She, being very poor, called to God that he would be pleased to shew her some way by which she might get bread. He heard her pray, and miraculously opened her eyes to the wonder of all. Her children ran into the street, crying out, 'My mother can see! my mother can see!' and her house was immediately filled with people who joined with her in thanksgiving. Her eyesight still continues clear. O God, what canst thou not do?

"If I have done any thing wrong, or left any thing undone among you, I beg you will inform me of it. Give my love to sister Drake and family. "I am, dear Brother, Your's always,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The following letter gives a brief description of the progress of the work of God in Newcastle, Hull, and Birmingham, while the same good work was winning its way through the Sheffield circuit. With these unusual displays of Divine Power, Mr. Bramwell was uncommonly elated.

LETTER LXXX.

To the Same.

"Baslow, Nov. 19, 1795.

"*Dear Brother*,—You would know my state of mind from brother Crowther's letter. My wife and Miss Rhodes are now with me in the Derbyshire part of the circuit. There is a revival in most places; and in some of them it is a great one. I preached here last night, in a new chapel, for the first time, when five persons received the blessing of sanctification, and one rich man found mercy. Congregations are uncommonly large in almost every place. This revival, if attended to and cherished, crowds our chapels and houses wherever it takes place. What a deception to suppose the reverse! If when a revival breaks out, the world learn that we, the ministers of Christ, are opposed to it then we cause destruction on every side.

"Mr. Taylor has received a letter from Newcastle, his last circuit. Mr. Smith informs him that Mr. Stamp had come over from Hull, and, after preaching, had told them of the revival in that town and of its continuance. He begged that the Newcastle people would pray for a communication of the same blessing that night. They did so, and the Lord came suddenly to his temple, and souls were soon brought into

liberty. Mr. Smith says, this good work goes on rapidly in every meeting, to the astonishment of many. One of our friends has been at Birmingham, and informs us that the ministry of brother Marsden is attended with the power of God throughout the circuit. A revival has broken out, and continues to prosper.

'The last time I preached in Sheffield, I had the happiness of seeing the large chapel much crowded, and was told hundreds could not enter. This has lately been the case every Sunday morning. The good work still proceeds. We expect a third preacher this week: I proposed brother Richard Emmett from Liverpool,—he who was with us one night at Manchester. I am informed he is coming.

"*Ann Cutler's Life and Death* will be out next week. The profits are to be given to the poor. How many copies must I send you? You will have the allowance to give away to any of the poor people in your circuit.

"I am your brother in Christ,

"WM. BRAMWELL.

"N. B. Without much prayer I shall certainly fall. Oh, let us wrestle for each other!"

Mr Bramwell next rejoices at the increasing number of those who in the different classes received the blessing of sanctification, and seems to take some small blame to himself for the little which he had said on this subject in a preceding letter. About this time, too, he was compelled to endure the opprobrium of some of his well-meaning brethren in the ministry, whose views on the hopeful nature and happy consequences of a revival did not exactly co-incide with his own. What is here written on this subject does not apply to his fellow-labourers in the same circuit, but to others, who felt no backwardness in giving open expression to their feelings of disapprobation.

LETTER LXXXI.

To the Same.

"Sheffield, Dec 17, 1795.

"*Dear Brother*,—I am more than ever astonished at the goodness of God. Truly, '*His ways are past finding out.*' Several circumstances have transpired which would occupy too much of my time to relate; but—I never can sufficiently praise his glorious name. The work in its manner has called me to great labour. I have been employed in giving tickets to about 120 people in Sheffield; and, in some classes, many members have found sanctification. I have not met, I think, above three classes in which some have not obtained deliverance,—sometimes five and more. This has been the greatest labour I have yet experienced. The last Sunday both chapels were filled; and at Garden-street, after preaching, the power of God descended. A cry went through the gal-

lery. I left many in distress. I cannot tell what number received mercy. When I first came here I wrote to you against the circuit,* because I saw no work of sanctification; but I am now astonished at the rapidity of this work in many places. I feel much concern for souls; and I have not lately gone out to tea or dinner without having had some persons purposely to meet us, whose souls during the interview have received salvation. I have scarcely had time to read a single page this month. The Lord help me to do his will! Gaining SOULS is yet the best employ.

"I feel much for Dewsbury, Stockport, and some other circuits.—There never was a greater contrast in the world, than that which now exists among us. How it will end, the Lord knows: we must pray more than ever. Some preachers are now believing, and others are hardening themselves. Can these two parties labour together? No! there will soon be a change. '*We know we are of God*;' and many of our opposing brethren know the same, but they want the grace of submission. Oh Lord, hasten that time!

"I had promised to go to the opening of a chapel, on Christmas Day in the Derby circuit. I have written to Mr Barber to fix the time and place of our meeting. As soon as I have his answer, I will write to you that you may meet us. Mr Emmett and some others will come.

"Dear brother, take courage. You are in your place. Do all you can to preserve the flock from destruction, and then be resigned. You will have another outpouring, and this will repay you: pray for it, and use every means with patience —We will fix for a change as soon as possible. I shall see you shortly at our meeting.—Pray for me in your love-feast. If Amos Street be well, send him to us the last day of this year, to be with us the night before. Write to me as often as you can. Our love to all. Amen!

"WM. BRAMWELL."

After '*lifting up the hands*' of his brother in the ministry, Mr Bramwell, as usual, describes his own christian experience, his spiritual enjoyments, and his renewed resolutions to press forward in the divine life. He desires again to be mentioned by name in the intercessions of the public congregation. What importance he attached to the prayers of the church of Christ, as well as to the supplications of every individual member, will be seen from his earnest importunity with almost every one of his correspondents, whatever might be his standing in the church or his christian attainments: If such a person possessed strong faith in God, Mr. Bramwell knew by experience, as he here intimates, that his effectual fervent prayer would avail with God, the Father of mercies, the Bounteous Dispenser of all blessings.

* See page 17.

LETTER LXXXII.

To the Same.

"Sheffield, March 24, 1796.

"*My Dear Brother,*—I hope you are still in the spirit of preaching and prayer. There are twelve hours in the day, in which men ought to work. Our time as ministers is the present: NOW is the season for our laying up a blessed store in heaven. I beg you will consider yourself a servant of God, sent into the world to bear the cross, to suffer reproach, to love your enemies, and to pray even for murderers. Oh! what compassion was in the mind of Christ! The same mind may be in us. '*I pray for THEM,*' says Jesus.—Oh blessed prayer! I long to pray like him; and He can teach us by his Holy Spirit. If your soul is still increasing in faith and love, if you are still speaking and acting for a crown, to obtain a full reward, '*blessed are you.*'

"I see myself still less. I really feel myself more helpless than I ever did. Oh how am I ashamed! I blush before the great God. I see St. Paul soaring aloft in spirit, and am astonished at not having soared with him. But I will now arise and press toward the mark,—if by any means I may obtain. Miss Rhodes is with us, our children are well, and our servant happy in the Lord. I say again, I really am ashamed of my little progress. A great work is still going on—we are obliged to try vast numbers. We use every means to know the wheat; and to preserve it, in the early period of its growth, from the tares. I hope that in this we shall be directed. Every day souls are awakened and converted in the distant parts of the circuit, and a great number in Sheffield have received sanctification and live in its enjoyment. Oh Lord! have mercy upon us, and upon all the Connection: preserve us all in peace and love! May we all unite in supplications for the glory of God to fill our land! and let every nation see this blessed work!

"Give our kind love to Mr. and Mrs. Highfield, and all friends. Pray for us in your love-feast. I know that God heard Birstall for Sheffield; and I shall give proof of this in the last day. The Lord be with you all!—Amen.

"I am your's in much love,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER LXXXIII.

To the Same.

"Sheffield, June 30, 1796.

"*Dear Brother,*—I received your letter with much joy. The Lord is taking some to himself, and preparing others for that change. It is the same in this place; many have lately escaped to glory, some of whom

are leaders. The Lord is still with you in the circuit: I wonder at his goodness. '*He will never leave us, he will never forsake us.*' We are precious in the sight of God, when we receive his Son. — Oh brother, continue stedfast in the will of God. Read, more than ever, the character of St. Paul. View him as a christian, as a preacher; — Oh what zeal, love, faith, patience, deadness to earth, and hope of glory! May I be more and more like him! I am still ashamed when I look at him: — Lord, help me. My love for Birstal circuit has been abundant for some time; but I am obliged to stop my thoughts when I look at the lambs in Dewsbury. Oh! still pray for them and all the connection. We want nothing but more of the Spirit of God among ourselves. May the Lord pour it down upon our brethren at the Conference! The work still goes on and deepens exceedingly in this circuit, souls are yet brought to God every day. Some remarkable conversions have lately taken place amongst the aged. I think I see more than ever I did of the mind of Christ in our family. O praise the Lord! But I see Satan laying plots every week to hinder and destroy. The Lord yet rebukes him. Pray for us, that Sheffield may always act in union. I would have you take no care or step about your station; only pray over it in secret every day. I think Mr. Taylor is for my going to Conference; but upon that I have not yet determined. I have been to visit brother Nelson, and saw many brought to God. The Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! May I meet you all in glory!

"I am your brother in Christ,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The following letter is without date, but it appears to have been written a short time previous to the assembling of the Annual Conference, when the great wish of Mr. Bramwell's heart was, that he might receive an appointment with those preaches who encouraged revivals, and among the people who "lived in them."

In this letter he also displays afresh the anxiety which he felt on account of the preachers being compelled, by the present system, to provide all the funds necessary for the support and the extension of the work of God. Few persons can conceive what an incroachment on the precious time of a Christian minister such an employment often proves, and the depressing effect which it produces on his spirit. In some of the poor circuits, the performance of this duty is a work of great difficulty; and, even in those which are better apportioned, it is not that sort of labour which a pious man would covet. But its unpleasantness is not confined to the various circuits: it is part of the business in some of the committees, at each Conference, to devise ways and means for meeting temporary deficiencies in the different branches of expenditure. It was Mr. Bramwell's desire, as it is that of several preach-

ers of eminence, that some plan might be contrived for getting rid of this incumbrance, and for assimilating the financial department of Methodism to that mode which was adopted by the Primitive Church, when fatiguing operation was performed by approved laymem; and when the preachers of the gospel were enabled without distraction to '*give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*'

LETTER LXXXIV.

To the Same.

"Sheffield, 1796.

"*My dear Brother*,—I received your friendly letter. Brother Wilkinson also received your's, and had written an answer but neglected sending it. He is quite happy, and more useful than ever. For more than six weeks I have enjoyed a much closer union with God, and every thing has driven me to prayer. The Lord is greatly at work in the town, and country. I believe forty persons experienced salvation on the day of our last love-fest in Sheffield, and I saw twelve others saved in the country yesterday.

"I hope Mr. Barbar will put me down somewhere with those who live in the revival: tell him this from me. I think I may see you as I come to Conference; but though I cannot fully promise, I will endeavour to perform.

"I am much engaged in prayer, and shall be so for three weeks to come. The Lord send a gracious answer! Amen. My wish is, that all *money matters* may be removed from us, and then I resign all my anxiety about the temporal affairs of the Connection.

"The Lord be with you! Pray that heaven may open at Leeds!—Amen. Our kind love to Mrs. Drake, I pray that she may recover.

"Believe me to be

"Your's in much love,

"Wm. Bramwell."

In the subjoined communication Mr. Drake is incited to acquiescence in the appointment which he had received from Conference. Mr. Bramwell again deserides his own experience, aspires after greater manifestations of the Divine glory, asks for the prayers of all his friends, and shews the great concern which he felt for the universal spread of the life and power of godliness, and the judgements of God which impended over those who set themselves as opposers to the plan which Divine Wisdom might be pleased to adopt for accomplishing this great object.

LETTER LXXXV.

To the Same.

"Staveley, Sept. 12, 1796.

"*My dear Brother*,—I always long to hear every particular from you, that I may have cause to mourn, or to rejoice with you. Your station was with us; but the situation at Huddersfield outweighed every plea. This may be of God and for his glory. I hope you are quiet content, which makes every situation a heaven. I am sure the Lord will bless you with Mr. Barber, a man with whom I should wish to travel, and who will make every thing comfortable to you, as far as he is able.

"Oh my brother, I am more than ever ashamed of myself. I am mourning before the Lord, longing for a depth of salvation which I have not yet received. I do assure you I am now inwardly on full stretch for heaven. I want the prayers of all. My soul is continually engaged with God. I can tell you, I am quiet tired with my manner of life, it is so far below my privilege. To be cleansed from sin, is a preparation for growth. I want to be always among the company of angels. We certainly are surrounded with this glory; and we may enjoy a very great degree of the Divine presence. The Lord gives us peace through the circuit. In standing quite still, I have once more seen the salvation of God,—but not without many a struggle in prayer. A work is going on; many have been lately brought to God, both rich and poor! —Glory, glory be to God! But we want a greater breaking-out through the circuit.

"I am sometimes tempted to think that the time is not come for the general spread. Oh! how often has Satan told me, that the Lord will bring a great curse upon many persons before he will suffer the great glory to spring forth. I wish you to answer me on this point. Notwithstanding great peace among the preachers, we certainly want, in general that Spirit which God uses in saving the world; and how can we be the means of the great glory, unless we have that Spirit given to us? I am constantly reasoning within myself, respecting the conversion of the world, and I want to think yet more upon this subject.

"Mr. Taylor is with God, and brother Emmett is striving to follow him in love. I will labor to run after them with all my soul, and seek to do the will of the Lord every day. Our kind love to you and Mrs. Drake; to Mr. and Mrs. Barber, and all friends. When must I see you at Sheffield, or meet you at some other convenient place.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

In the four succeeding letters Mr. Bramwell endeavors to stir up his own mind and that of his correspondent to fresh resolutions of zeal

and activity in the service of his Divine Master. He also deplores the secession of some persons whom he greatly loved in the Lord.

LETTER LXXXVI.

To the Same.

Sheffield, March 3, 1797.

"*My dear Brother,*—I am now examining my state, in the same room where you found me. I do find that my soul enjoys more of the image of God. I am ashamed of one thing,—my unfaithfulness in public. I resolve through grace to speak more pointedly to the sinners and to the gay; though I still see it right to do all in much love. O may I never soften or smooth down the truthes of God!

"Can you join me every day at two o'clock without fail, to pray for four things?—

"1, All that God has promised to us in our own salvation.

"2. To station us the next year.

"3. For all the Methodist preachers.

"4. For the general spread of the revival.

"I always think of you with joy. You see the nature, power, and effects of God's proceeding. Your fellow-laborers heartily joy in the same;— I think this is the very next door to heaven. We shall always have different faces; God is much at work in Sheffield, &c. Many have lately gone through the strait gate, some of whom were very great sinners,

"Mr. Miller is at present owned of God in an extraordinary manner. He sometimes receives reproof, but takes it well; is a perfect child in temper; and the blessed Jesus condescends greatly to honor him in his labors. I wonder at the love of God to man! I think we should pray more than ever. My love to all friends. I beg you will write soon.

"I am your's &c.

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXXXVII.

To the Same.

"Sheffield, 1797

"*My dear brother Drake,*—I hope nothing but death will separate you and me. I am wonderfully supported under every trouble. God has great mercy upon me. I saw nearly all the country part of the Nottingham circuit return, with about 300 of the society in the town. In many places we had a blessed work of God. A district meeting was held this day to consult about a new chapel.

"In Sheffield the Lord has begun to work almost in every meeting. I cannot tell how many have gone away during the division; but I think

there were five or six hundred. All the country part yet remains with us, except two small places. Such a leaders' band for union and love was held last Monday night, as I have not been in before. Some are returning to us again, with joy. — Please let me know immediately how every thing is with you all, and the state of the circuit. Many here are lively, and the Lord is with us indeed. I have had you much upon my mind: I feared that you would run. I beg that we may fight it out in love. Let us die conquering.

"I am your affectionate brother

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER LXXXVIII.

To The Same.

"Sheffield, Nov, 30, 1797.

"*My Dear Brother*, I need help from God every moment, — I see all my past things are little indeed. I am saved through mercy, and do find a growing in all the graces. O how my soul feels for sinners! I could breathe my last in entreating them to turn to God. I often sink into love and weeping over them. My wife lives near to God: I am ashamed when with her. She has truly run before me. — Oh may I go on much faster in this blessed road of LOVE! — It is LOVE, all love; — it is burning love to God and man!

"The Lord inclines many to hear. — The sight of our congregations in both chapels would cause you to praise God. We have blessed seasons together. There is now a work upon many, and I hope it will end in salvation. I feel very much for many who are gone from us. Debate has subsided; but the number gone is great, and hundreds of precious lambs who were as near to me as my own flesh. I feel the most because I fear they are now losing their life. Their ministry is not lively — they cannot live long: — Oh how I feel! — The Lord bless them; and though they have left us, may not one of them turn back into the world!

"I am thankful that you stand in the power of God; you know how to distinguish between what is precious and what is vile. Praised be God for this! I trust the light which you have received in the blessed work, will never become darkness. I hope you improve every week in preaching; this is also your privilege. Oh my brother! resolve to rise early: let not flesh and blood hinder: gain this point, and all will fall beneath your feet. Read much; but write whenever you read, — have a book on purpose. Have all your skeletons of sermons in books, and have a small pocket-index to the whole. This will prevent your repeating the same things. Labour for something fresh every sermon, and yet nothing but STRONG GOSPEL. You must be a new preacher this year. I believe you will take the hint. The Lord is with you and will be with

you. I pray for you. May you pray for me! I live with God in Christ I only wish to know and do his will in all things!

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER LXXXIX.

To the same.

"Westgate Hill, March 27, 1798.

"*Dear Brother*,— I long to see you, that we may mix our prayers before the Throne. I would have had you to come over at this time, but am engaged to take brother Nelson's place for a fortnight; so that I have no vacancy. Can you come on Saturday night to see me? Please to send me a line to Birstal.

"I do see the glory of the Lord: I live with him. It is all Christ: 'I nothing have, I nothing am.' Oh my soul burns for his glory! I see a few saved in every meeting. May Heaven shine again on every part of Birstal circuit! — May all live!

"Your's affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The author next adverts to some cause of shyness between him and some of his brethren in the ministry, which he appeared to suspect was caused by his views on certain subjects having been divulged, by Mr. Drake, to those from whom he should have wished them to remain concealed. After openly stating his surmise to his friend, he does not, after the manner of the world, shut himself up in a gloomy moroseness, but expands his mind in those high and devout feelings which few circumstances of a painful nature had the power to damp or suppress. Happy frame of mind, the effect of Grace Divine! when under such a source of discouragement, by which Satan would 'try to thrust sore at him,' he could joyfully declare, that at no former period of his life had he experienced such union with God as he then did. Yet, the sincerity and intensity of his friendship prompted him, at the close, to request a speedy answer from his friend, with which Mr. Drake immediately complied, as a succeeding letter will testify.

LETTER XC.

To the Same.

"Nottingham, Sept. 27, 1798.

"*My dear Brother*,—I hope you are well in body and in mind. I am much ashamed of myself, because I did not come to see you, but I thought my way was not open at any time. In this I might be mistaken. There is another thing: I perceive that some preachers have not freedom with me, which makes me cautious, as I see they are in some pain

in my company. The Lord knows the reason of this; and I think he has shown it to me. I always found the greatest union with you; but have had some doubt whether for some cause or other that union has not been weakened. I always plainly told you my views of things: If you have opened my mind to others, in such things as ought to have been kept in your own heart, it may in some degree have broken our fellowship,—But this I leave.

"I long to be with you, that we may join our faith and power with God. I have been at Liverpool, &c. &c.—I saw his Glory among men: —he is still the same God. I bless the Lord, I am saved every moment, and do declare to you that my union with God is such as I never before experienced. I have given myself to continual prayer; and, in this circuits, I see souls awakened and saved nearly every day. God is working, and will continue to work, glory be to his name! My dear brother, my soul is enlarged. I think I could go through fire for the Lord Jesus. Lord send me; here I am. I have found but very few in this circuit that know any thing of sanctification, excepting a few in Nottingham; but God will come. On this subject several of my dear brethren are more determined than ever. O great God, stand by them, and raise up a thousand to spread the flame!

"This conference has been a poor one. Many were afraid of God working,—a scheme to weaken the revival; but it was not carried, nor ever can be. We shall rise above it all. None can hinder: God is King, and shall reign over us. Oh! go on! God bless you, your wife, and all friends!—Amen. My wife and children are at Liverpool. Do write soon. "I am your dear brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The next letter, though without date, is an answer to a satisfactory communication from Mr. Drake. The chief object of it, is, on Mr. Bramwell's part to intreat forgiveness from his friend for having entertained the unjust surmise against him contained in the preceding letter. The whole of it exhibits a manly frankness, combined with great humility of mind in acknowledging his fault, both of which are highly becoming a Christian, and will tend to enhaunce the estimation in which the pious reader has been already induced to hold Mr. Bramwell's character.

LETTER XCI.

To the Same.

"Nottingham, 1798-9.

"*My dear Brother*,—Oh I am thankful,—I cannot sufficiently praise God! I feel that I am the poorest soul that ever lived; I never was so ashamed in my life; God be merciful to me! Oh that I was with you

to confess my fault! Can you ever forgive me?—The nearest union is the most susceptible of jar. I wonder you can love me or forgive me. My heart is full, I do sink before God. Can you ever bear to see me? I have been tempted concerning you. I feared, I much feared, that you were caught in the snare; but glory, glory be to God, and to the Lamb for ever!

"I am in near union with Jesus. I do love him more and more. The Lord works nearly every night in some degree; but in several parts of this circuit we have many members not justified; and few in the country know any thing about sanctification. The Lord ride on! *O save us all!!*

"I bless God for sister Drake and her labour of love. The lord help her in body and mind. I expect Miss Rhodes here: if she does not come soon, I believe you will have her at Otley.—Oh, my brother, fear not, the Lord will be with us more and more. We must suffer!—I hope we shall do it patiently. * * * * *

I expect to see you this Christmas, if the Lord permit: till then pray for me, and do write again and assure me of your forgiveness.

"I am your's affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

How diversified and important are the labors of an itinerant Methodist preacher, when they are performed in a proper spirit and with a reference to the glory of God! Some of them are incidentally noticed in the subjoined communication; but these are only a very small portion of the regular employment of every minister in the Connexion. Allusion is here likewise made to the only literary work, except "the Life of Ann Cutler," which Mr. Bramwell ever undertook to publish in a separate form.

LETTER XCII.

To the Same,

"Nottingham, Nov. 1798-1800.

"*My dear Brother,*—I expected to see you before this time. My wife was several weeks at Sheffield waiting for me; but this circuit called for my stay, and much, against my inclination, I have been prevented from seeing you. I long to be personally present with you; yet I am not one day without your company in my heart. At the throne of grace I will meet you every day, at the time you mention; may our prayers evermore prevail!

"I feel for souls more than ever. In our meeting of local preachers at Mansfield, the last week, our first subject was, 'St. Paul's intense desire for the salvation of souls;' and whether it was not our privilege to cherish the same feeling.' I argued that it was. In the band meet-

ing several preachers received sanctification. Brother Longden was with us, also brother Nelson and some others from the Sheffield circuit. In the watch-night there was a shaking, and about eight were clearly saved.

"Brother Longden came with us to Nottingham. In the select band, on Friday, seven received full salvation; and several more this week. Our Chapel is crowded. I am told that many go away, because they have no seats but crowded chapels alone will not satisfy. Oh how I long to see souls saved. Some places in this circuit still remain unmoved, whilst many persons in other parts receive perfect love.

"Mary Barrett has not yet arrived, and I do not know when she will. The Lord stand by and prosper every instrument employed in his work. I will, if possible, either exchange with you, or pay you a short visit. But our numerous collections compel preachers to remain at their posts.

"One thing has been on my mind concerning you;—I think you should try every place in your circuit in the consolatory way. You may do so; I only give you the idea, which has been much upon my mind. Preach till the conference in an encouraging manner, and lift up the hands which hang down. In doing this you will feel satisfied. Sometimes we must beat; but that is a rare case. Dwell much on the love of Jesus, &c.

"I have extracted from D'Oyley's translation of *St. Chrysostom on the Priesthood*,* a small work which I entitle 'The *Salvation Preacher*.' I have given it into the hands of a printer, and expect it will be published in the course of three weeks, the price will be about 2s.—You should have a copy. I wish that all our preachers and people would read the work, and act accordingly.

"O pray for me!—Do pray! Our kind love to sister Drake. The Lord bless you! I beg you will give my love to Mr. B

"I am dear brother in pure love, Your's &c

"Wm. Bramwell."

How faithfully have these two excellent men warned, reproved, strengthened and comforted each other! What unbosoming of their whole souls, and the causes of their growth or decline in the Divine Life! This is true Christian friendship, and when exercised with much affection and tenderness, as by these two individuals, it is productive of the most happy personal consequences. After enumerating the earthly bliss with which his cup overflowed, the poet has most appropriately added,

'And in a kind and faithful friend
Hast doubled all my store.'

*This judicious abridgment of D'Oyley's translation has much spirit in it, and has been published with corrections and amendments by the printer of this volume. It may be had of any bookseller.

LETTER XCIII.

To the Same.

"Nottingham, June 18, 1799.

"*My dear Brother*,—I thought I had written to you the last, and therefore was very desirous to receive an answer. However, I am glad to hear that all is well, excepting some little decline in your spirits, and I hope it is but little. I have always seen your action to be your life, and am persuaded this is the case with most. I feel we cannot live in all the union, without a full improvement of every grace. Is your present situation calculated for improvement? Can you work? Can you give full scope (if I may so speak) to the power which worketh in you? Are you in the least afraid of consequences? I know we are nothing in the sight of God, and all the UNCTION (a word which you feel, but which is little known,) is from God.

"I think you submitted at first to the following reasoning:—'This people have rejected the life.—'*Secondly*, The preacher now with me, will oppose. I cannot make my way through all this. I will quietly go on, and yield at least for a 'season.' Did you not, my brother, suffer your locks to be shorn in this way, and then become like another man? I know you wish me to write freely. I do so, because you are in my heart daily, to live and die with you. My dear brother, I have many things to say to you; and I hope you have some to say to me. If we should not be stationed together, o nearer each other after Conference, I will change circuits with you, for about a fortnight, which may do us both much good, and may be profitable to the people here and with you. Great things are impending still: I have seen the reason of the last convulsion. Of this I think I have little doubt.

"I am nearer the Lord, and have a daily working. Oh! may I praise him! Pray much for me. I see good done:—The Lord saves, and will save. Fear not; you cannot tell what God may yet do by your 'RAM'S HORN:' Some walls I believe shall yet fall before you. Love every man; but let not an angel shackle you. I hope dear Mrs. Drake is well and much with Jesus, and that it will not be long before I hear from you or see you. Let us live in the closest union and use every means to improve it. This circuit, I suppose, will want two preachers. It is probable that I shall stay, if I live so long; but I am less than ever careful where I am placed. May our stations be of God!—O may they be of God. My wife joins in love to you both, and shall ever pray that we may meet each other in one place near the throne. Write soon.

"I am your dear brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

This letter is of the same faithful and affectionate character as the preceding. It likewise contains an account of the progress of religion in several circuits. The very repetitions, in different letters of this success of the gospel, prove how much Mr. Bramwell's heart was engaged in the prosperity of the work, and what raptures he felt when '*the word of the Lord had free course*' among men, when '*it ran and was glorified*' in the conversion of sinners and in the establishment of saints.

LETTER XCIV.

To the Same.

"Culverton, 1800.

"*My dear Brother*,—I do mourn with you; I want to watch and weep by your side, over souls coming to Jesus. The Lord knows the reason why Otley does not submit; but, '*thou shalt know hereafter.*' Oh for patience! a grace never more wanted than at those seasons! Is it possible that, in such circumstances, a soul can live? Is it possible that your soul can grow in grace? It is. I do believe.—'*Lord, increase our faith!*' It rejoices us that dear sister Drake lifts up your trembling hands; I pray that her faith may not fail. The Lord keep you in the closest union! You will soon have done your work; and great labour, with much suffering, may increase your glory, more than great labour with much rejoicing. '*Lift up your hand, your redemption draweth nigh.*'

"I have the pleasure to inform you, that a great work of the Lord is going on at present in this circuit. Numbers are quickened,—sinners awakened,—souls justified,—and many receive and walk in perfect love. In following sister Barrett this week I found ten saved at one place twenty at another, five at another, &c. &c. I never knew one man so much blessed as this young woman is in the salvation of souls. Brother Pipe and brother Timperley are zealously employed every night in seeking lost souls. I sink at Christ's feet, and say, 'Glory! Glory!' Nearly all the dead, small places in the circuit, are quickened again; and a considerable number from the world are coming into the Church.

"Mr. Mc'Allum writes me, that a good work is going on in the Leicester Circuit:—he has lately joined 140 members, and is now laid up through much labour. I have been to see Mr. Reynolds in Ashby circuit at some places the work broke out, and will, I think, proceed. Sheffield stands fast; but no great work. Mr. G. Smith, after about four months' crying, wrestling, and weeping, now sees the work running like a flame through a great part of the circuit, and many are saved. Liverpool and Manchester sink; and London also, after having had a few drops. In some parts of Newark circuit there is a good work; likewise at Hinckley. Thomas Shaw is all alive; the Lord is with him.

"Oh! my dear brother, we may have more. I hunger, I thirst, I pey-

er had more heavenly enjoyment. My wife likewise grows in grace. O praise Him! It appears I must continue to watch. I wait to see you: can you come? Tell me. Mr. Miller rises from his weakness. Souls are saved, and many more lately. But I must see you, to tell you all. Do write soon. I am, with much respect to sister Drake,

"Your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

In what a state of high enjoyment as a Christian Mr. Bramwell lived, may be learnt from the following. What self-abasement joined with the most exalted views of Christ and his sufficiency! These are excellent preparatives for a constant walk in the way of holiness and happiness.

LETTER XCV.

To the Same.

"Nottingham, 1800.

"*My Dear Brother*,—I have been confined some days through sickness; but hope in a little time to be able to labor again. I shall be very thankful if our lot be cast together the next year. Should we use any means to bring this about? I am near the Lord. To me all things are alike from him, whether sickness or health. Oh! may we improve all to his glory!—I am certain we have not yet received the whole. Should we not reach forward every day? Nothing can satisfy us, but the greatest glory. Forget all things behind; look forward. God is waiting to impart it. My soul hungers still more. My dear Drake, I am less in my own eyes than ever you knew me. I hope you will see the meek and gentle *Lamb*,—yea, may you see the Lord Jesus,—living and walking in my vile body. Oh! pray, still pray every day! We shall prosper if we pray.

"The Lord gives us one heart and one way in this circuit; his blessing is among us: may it much increase! One man, who had been seeking salvation five years, came a hundred miles to see me last week. I never saw one sunk so low in unbelief. He made no struggle, but seemingly gave up all. On Saturday night the Lord saved him. Oh the change! He is gone, to tell his friends what God hath done for his soul.

"My wife is well and truly happy. Ann is gone to school. We have only John at home. We are going to heaven; may we run swiftly. My dear brother, write to me all your mind, and give our kind love to Mrs. Drake, your fellow laborer, and Mr. Whitaker. God bless you all! Amen and Amen!

"I am you dear brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The strength of affection which Mr. Bramwell here mentions, as "bordering on the painful," is a necessary consequence of the present state of our imperfection in the body. Whatever treasure of this kind we may possess, we are made to feel that it is but '*in earthen vessels.*' But in all providential dispensations, '*the Lord knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust;*' he therefore apportions our sufferings and our enjoyments to the varied capacities which he has wisely bestowed. If, in circumstances of extreme pleasure or extreme pain, we be in danger of having our reason overpowered by the intensity of our feelings, it is only necessary for us to call upon HIM who stills the waves and "calms the roaring sea," and he will display his wisdom and power, either by removing or abating the cause, or by imparting '*more grace*' that we may be able to bear those trials to which we are called in the order of Providence. The Lord will then set our feet upon a rock, against which

> ——— "the angry waves, in vain,
> May dash their foaming spray."

This was the scriptural method which Mr. Bramwell pursued with singular success.

In a subsequent part of the following letter, he describes one of the temptations with which he was assailed. "Yet," he adds, "I never lived so much with Christ, so much in God, as at present." He found, that '*God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.*'

The year 1800 was rendered memorable in Great Britain by a great dearth of provisions. "An unproductive harvest" was the specious reason assigned by several persons for suddenly raising the price of corn to a height almost unprecedented. In several manufacturing towns, the populace became outrageous, and vented their anger on those who had brought provisions for sale to the various markets. But in Nottingham, and in every town where religion had its legitimate influence over the hearts and conduct of professors, not one person connected with Methodism was concerned in any riotous act, or in abetting those who were the lawless aggressors. The blessings of religion are manifested to great effect, in such instances as these, when it teaches the poor and needy to exercise the Christian graces of resignation and patience.

LETTER XCVI.

To, the Same.

"Tag-Hill, Oct. 16, 1800.

"*My Dear Brother,*—I am striving every day to meet you in the kingdom of glory. I often feel much for you; and, if I could, I would immediately come to see you. My intense and increasing love to my dear friends, borders a little upon the painful, because of absence; yet I do not want to be unclothed, but clothed upon. My soul longs for the *country;* the *heavenly* place. Sometimes I am tempted that all my way is wrong, and there must be a nearer way. I feel grace comes only by little, and but a little at once. Yet I never lived so much with Christ, so much in God, as at present. I do assure you, I feel nothing but an inclination to offer prayer and praise. Oh bear with me! My soul rises as I write.

"The Lord is working here much in the midst of great distress. A famine is near our habitation. The poor are in great want, because of the high price of provisions: yet we do not know that any Methodist in Nottingham has been concerned in the late riot. God is with us, and comforts us in all our troubles. All is peace at the present. Public tranquillity was restored, without the loss of one life, or any person being injured, excepting one who has now recovered.

"The Lord bless you in Halifax. I durst not say one word about your station, believing that your proper place was Halifax. I trust you will labor with all your soul, and see a great work of God in every place. Do you retain the blessing of perfect love, and abundantly increase in it? Do, my dear brother, let us live! Oh! live every day near the Lord. Drink deep, continue instant in prayer, wrestling prayer, strong cries and tears before God! May we receive all the Lord can give us.

"My wife is well and much alive: sister Rhodes is quite in the act of praying, &c., and lives much nearer to God than I have ever before known her. We all desire our love to you, to Mrs. Drake, and to brother and sister Highfield, &c.

"I am your dear brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The following letter, written in great confidence, contains much prudent counsel, in addition to a description of the writer's own happy state of mind, and the prosperity of the work of God, — two circumstances which Mr. Bramwell seldom omitted to notice in any of his epistolatory communications.

LETTER XCVII.

To the Same.

"Leeds, Dec. 16, 1801.

"*My dear brother Drake,*— I want to hear from you; you are much upon my mind and in my prayers.

* * * * * * Respecting your great cross,— if you can receive it in the Lord, and with sweetness meet the rod, it may produce an exceeding weight of glory. Nothing but much more prayer will enable you to surmount the trial; but this is possible; and in improving all things in this way, the greatest good will be the effect.

"Oh my brother! time is short, and we will improve it. Many are departing in different places, and the next call may be to us, '*Come up hither.*' I never saw such need to be always ready. I have given myself to the Lord lately, a daily sacrifice, and am receiving him for my all in all. I do live with him, and wait every day till my change come. I see where I have frequently misimproved the means. I have not at all times reaped the full benefit of the cross; but I am ashamed and confounded, and sink before the Lord in deep humility of mind. My wife is truly devoted to the Lord. Numbers here, and in some places in the circuit, are turning to the Lord. Yet I am often much tempted to give up the whole. Preaching is my cross; indeed I wonder how I ever began, and how I have continued so long. But truly it is the Lord, who hath helped me hitherto. Oh! do continue to pray for me in private, and in your family.

"We have great need to guard against our natural turn; yet we know what it is, and, through the blessing of God, may every day overcome. I trust you retain all the life, and love, and power, you ever had. Be quite free with the Nottingham friends; the more freedom you make the better it will be.

* * * * * * * * *

"I think you should meet in close band with brother Miller: Suppose you meet on the Saturday; and as you are all in the same house, this will always remove any little jealousies that may arise, and will preserve you in perfect union. If any trifling difference should take place, crush it instantly. Rather bleed than show any shyness. You will bear with me. I know what it is for two families to be together in the same house. Be always willing to own any little fault, and beg of each other to show every thing that may seem to be amiss. This will tend to your great and mutual good.

"God bless sister Drake and your sister. The Lord bless brother Miller and all his family. Read, watch, pray; be a Paul in all things. Amen! I am your ever dear brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL.

At the commencement of the following letter Mr Bramwell alludes to his trials in the Leeds circuit, which are mentioned in the 99th page of the first volume. It was eminently true of him that "sincerity called forth all his powers in affection." He also communicates his thoughts on the subdivision of circuits.

LETTER XCVIII.

To the Same.

"Wetherby, 1804.

"*My Dear Brother Drake*,—My state the last Conference prevented our conversation and union. But I am now, and ever have continued to be, in the same love to you and yours. My soul is more than ever in love with God, and all good men; and sincerity calls forth all my powers in affection. I have always believed this to be in you, and I trust it will ever continue.

"I have for years seen the evil of subdivisions of circuits, told all my mind to Mr Mather and others, and had strength to say to the Conference that we could not remain in this way much longer in this. But it is worse and worse. Preachers are put upon the rack for temporals, while souls are perishing for hunger of the word. I mean to say all my mind again on this subject: besides, it has an enervating effect upon us and we become like other men. I would have you remonstrate by letter to the Committee, and tell them to unite the circuit again, and beg them to do the same with many others. There are a number in the same situation.

"We are all well, and many are saved. This is a comfortable small circuit; but we are confined on every side. At present I am strongly solicited to go to a larger circuit, and probably must comply. My dear brother Drake, my life is prayer. I assure you, I am just in Heaven. It is the Lord. O may I have his power, and praise him for ever. God bless you and yours. The Lord direct you in all things and bring us safe to glory—Amen! I am yours, as ever,

"WM. BRAMWELL.

"P. S. We had a great meeting last Sunday, in a barn twenty yards long. Persons came to it from nearly all parts of Yorkshire. I think I never saw more souls filled with the Holy Ghost; and many were delivered from the guilt of sin."

The next letter is one of condolence, as well as of business and religious intelligence.

LETTER XCIX.

To the same.

"Hull, June 20, 1805.

"*My dear Brother*—The Lord be with you and your partner for ever! Time is short, and we have much to do; but the Lord Jesus is our help, and will be our deliverer. You have had much to endure. I wonder how you could proceed with any comfort. I hope you see some good, and also preserve your own soul in all the life of God. Oh how well to remain in the truth, and to have strong faith in the word of God! To rise, is *our* duty, as it is also *His* command. Let us live in the closest fellowship with God. You know we may do all things in him; you may see, talk, walk, and suffer, in the Lord:—this is our heaven on earth; and in glory all will be in God; yea, not the least thing without him. I hope your eye is always upon him; let nothing separate you from Christ.

"I was at Howden quarterly meeting, when the friends agreed to write to two preachers; I mentioned you. Yesterday Mr. Robinson, from Bridlington, asked me who they must have for their Superintendent. I made free to say they must, if possible, have you. He will write to you; and, if you have not promised elsewhere, they will send a proper petition. I would have you go to Bridlington, if they have not written to you from Howden. My wife will perhaps meet Mrs. Drake at Mr. Longden's. I may come; but of this I am not quite certain. God is working here and in the circuit in the same way as before; but not so generally. At one country place forty have joined us as members. Some are Roman Catholics, and, among them, a fine young man, who was clerk to the Romish Priest: this has given great offence.

"Pray for me. God bless you! Give our love to sister Drake.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER C.

To the Same.

"Hull, Jan. 4, 1806

"*My dear brother Drake*,—I intended to have been with you at York on the 22d instant, but by an unforeseen providence have been prevented, and am now writing to Mr. Isaacs accordingly. I do assure you, I want to be with you. My time of preaching was fixed at Hull, or I should have been with you a night as I returned from Mr. Wilson's.

"The flame of love and salvation is now breaking out on every side

at Hull. I know we cannot fast and pray in vain. God is with you. Go on, my dear brother.

"I have received a letter from Mr. West, who informs me of some extraordinary meetings at Glasgow, in one of which about twenty were saved. The Scotch enter into it with all their hearts. I wish I could have seen our brother from Halifax, but we must be parted a little time.

"What will be done? The state of the world is truly mysterious I never saw affairs so critically circumstanced in this nation as they are at present. '*But the Lord reigneth!*' What he will do with us, I know not. Let us be ready every moment. We can preach this every where.

"Mr. Griffith is called from us for about three weeks, to visit his son at Bath, who is sick, and this detains me in the circuit. At his return, I hope to see you. Our kind love to Mrs. Drake. We do not forget you. Let us still have union, and we shall be together for ever; our love to all friends.

"I am your dear brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The next letter contains Mr. Bramwell's counsel in an unpleasant affair respecting a person who has, since that period, withdraw from the exercise of the christian ministry in the Methodist Body, and has become a minister of the Independent persuasion. His advice is judicious and well-applied. But, like the holy Apostle Paul, he soon leaves this lower subject, and begins again to describe the progress of the divine life in his own soul, and the work of salvation on the minds of the people. Indeed, these two topics,—personal religion, and the success of the gospel,—though often repeated in Mr. Bramwell's correspondence, never appear tedious to a pious mind, but must always be viewed as strong proofs of the importance which he attached to them, and of the influence which they had on his conduct by exciting all the sanctified powers of his mind to renewed exertions in his holy calling. One of these exertions was, in the same letter, to press on the mind of his various correspondents, in short but weighty sentences, a growth in holiness, and a constant aspiring after the Divine image and likeness.

LETTER CI.

To the Same.

"Sunderland, 1807.

"*My Dear Brother,*—I received your's with much concern, and am rather at a loss to know what you should do in the affair you mention. Yet, *in the first place*, that your labours may be in some degree profitable, give up all conversation about that business in every house through the whole circuit, and never hear it mentioned even by your most rea-

pectable friends; they will see directly your design in this, and will unite with you in crushing the evil. I think you should tell * * all your mind. But how can you, as an upright man of God, keep it from the District and Conference? I do not see how you can; this must be left to your serious consideration.

"*Again*, I do not see how you can travel with him another year; this also must employ your deepest thought. I am now persuaded that he ought not to be a preacher amongst us; but there will be a difficulty in removing him from his post. After all, I believe that it has been owing to a sudden fit of envy, and a degree of revenge, which is a fruit of the former, and will ever seek the destruction of him who is the superior. I have seen enough of this.—But let us love, pray for, and forgive our enemies, and let us live continually with God. The Lord direct you in all things! Amen.

"I hope you will retain all your faith and patience. The nearer we come to God, the more sensible we are of the least sin or temptation. I find it the best to dwell continually in God, feeling in the soul that all is given up, and depending upon God our Saviour for all things,—never leaving our place, never diverted from our object, and having the closest union. Earth is then a continual heaven. To be always fully prepared for glory, is our privilege in this world. O the salvation, the great salvation! Who can explain it? All evil gone, all grace imparted, all hell subdued, and Christ continully glorified!—Entire sanctification is much departed from us in general, as a body,—from the pulpit, the Magazines, &c. What can be done?

"We have added since Conference 500 members. There is a great work in several parts of the country, but not so general in the town. Yet the congregations are astonishing. Our chapel is the same size as Oldham Street Chapel, Manchester. We have two more chapels, and every seat is let in all the three. I am surprised at the crowds who attend.

"Do give my love to Mr. and Mrs. Clarke, to Mr. and Mrs. Agar, and to all the dear friends. O how I should love to see you! but I am prevented at present. If I live till Conference, the Lord knows where I shall be stationed, and I am less concerned about it than ever. How is this? I have an invitation from Wakefield, Newcastle, Glasgow, &c. What do you think? Must I go to Glasgow? I suppose you know that Mr. C—— is gone, and, I am confident, to glory. You are one less in number, but O rejoice that salvation came! Let us pray more than ever. Be all alive, my brother. God will be with you and bless you. My wife joins me in much love to you and dear sister Drake. Our Ann is clearly saved, and praises God continually at Miss Wright's school. I hope all the others will be with us in glory.

"I am your affectionate broter,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The following letter is of the same complexion as the preceding, — descriptive of Mr. Bramwell's own state and that of the people under his pastoral care, and contains exhortations to personal piety on the part of his correspondent.

LETTER CII.

To the Same.

"Sunderland, Feb. 11, 1808.

"*My dear brother,*— I am frequently thinking of you; I want much to know how you are in body, family, mind, and labours. I hear of good things from some circuits; but am at a loss to know whether the increase of 'pure religion and undefiled' be general. Numbers are turning from their outward evils, and uniting with the Methodist Societies. I had been waiting for a greater work this year than there was the last. In this circuit there is now a very favourable prospect. All the chapels and preaching places are crowded. Every means has been used to preserve a strict discipline; and, thought it has been hard labour, it has been effected with much patience and love. Two hundred have joined us the last quarter. I have seen, at the least, one hundred find mercy. About 70 soldiers meet in class.

* * * * * * * * *

"The people are most friendly. But the work of sanctification is unknown. However, it will come with power. We are about to establish a band for this purpose, and hope to see numbers receive full salvation. My dear Drake, I have the same view of the work as I always had, and the same feeling of the POWER with increase. I was never more tempted; — I am followed by satan continually. The Lord save me for ever! I have lately had some deep views of the glory of our dispensation, and am now striving. I see all must be given up every moment. There must be continual prayer, and patience with all. O may we live in all the salvation! You may depend upon it, my dear brother Drake, that to preach and pray in the Holy Ghost, and to have strong faith in God, is the way to see satan fall before us. Go on; never give it up; never sink! The Lord will be with you and bless you. I was never less, never weaker; yet God is Almighty to save. I have thought much of glory, and of those who are called to enjoy it. I long to be with them, but I wait, I can wait; I can say, — 'Willing to stay, willing to go.' Amen!

"My wife and John are well; they join me in love to you, Mrs. Drake and all friends. Let me know every thing in a long letter. The Lord bless you and be with you. I have many things to say to you.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

Though Mr. Bramwell continued to correspond with his friend Mr. Drake for some time after the date of this letter yet this is the last which the widow of the latter is able to find, and which, with the preceding, she forwarded for the purpose of their being incorporated in this second volume.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Letters to various Friends.

THREE of the subsequent letters are addressed in succession to Miss Barrett, one of Mr. Bramwell's most intimate correspondents. The first of them contains much pertinent advice and some profound remarks. In one part of it he most justly observes, "Numbers will never be saved without great efforts in the instruments: If so, let us pluck them as brands from the burning, and leave others to draw to God the next generation." This was one of the first principles of primitive Methodism; and the resolution here founded upon it (to "pluck sinners as brands from the burning,") should still, in a peculiar manner, be the motive for action in all Methodist preachers. Whenever it ceases to be the chief and actuating principle among us as a people, the glory of our dispensation will have departed; and, whatever other motives may be substituted for it, — whether they be a zeal for the religious education of youth, or a desire to build up believers, *only as such*, — they cannot compensate for the loss of this motive, which is so essentially necessary for the promised success of the christian ministry. The education of the rising generation, the enforcing of strict discipline, the introduction of sacred classic literature into the preliminary studies of persons devoted to the preaching of the gospel, and the training up of adult Christians in an acquantance with the exalted privileges of their holy vocation, are all matters of great consequence in their different degrees, that is, in subservience to the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways. The gospel addresses its first principles to men, as sinners before God; and we give full effect to its invitations when we exhort all men (who '*have* without exception *sinned and come short of the glory of God*,') freely to accept the benefit of its salutary provisions. Even those who receive the best education at the hands of pious parents, have as much need to be addressd in the character of sinful individuals as those who never enjoyed any of the blessings of learning. Education may throw much light on the human mind, under a system of intellectual culture; but in native aversion to the merciful requisitions of the law of righteousness by faith, both the learned and the ignorant and uncultivated stand on equal ground: and the religion of Christ, finding them all *laden with in-*

iquities, treats them as thus burdened before it can hold out for their acceptance the relief which their perilous circumstances require. '*For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.*'

LETTER CIII.

To Miss Barrett.

"Coverton, May 30, 1793.

"*Dear sister Barrett*,—You and I shall be much tempted in this world and we may be in the greatest danger of reasoning, where there is no rule for our direction. In this we can only act according to the best of our judgment, and then leave the whole in God's hands. You may think that, because you are not able to labour as some might expect, your stay will be troublesome to the friends; but, in this case, remember your all is the Lord's,—and this is enough for a Christian. You have the power of saying, '*Thy will be done!*' but you have not the power of saying, 'I will labour where and as I please.'—I am fully satisfied you are in your place. I think I have seen this clearly since you came. Your way is open,—numbers receive the power. Oh! go on, as your strength will permit; and may the Lord Jesus be with you!

"I have had some serious reflections that your time will be short, and I think, shorter than mine. You do more work in less time. I must have more time to fulfil my task. If I did more for God I might go with you: I can say, 'Amen, let me reach the same glory for ever!' I am still more convinced that the Lord would have us feel and labour like St. Paul, and leave all consequences in his hands. Numbers will never be saved without great efforts in the instruments: but Oh how mysterious is this If so, let us pluck them as brands from the burning, and leave others to draw to God the next generation. I burn with desire to be useful in in the world. Here I am; Lord, send me. I long to see you and my brethren. Our souls are united, and shall be for ever. Nothing shall separate between us and Jesus.

"Last Sunday noon I saw the Spirit working, in some degree, as on the day of Pentecost. At night a great Deist was struck as with lightning, and roared out among the people in the greatest agony for about twenty minutes. All around him were in tears; and the Lord Jesus saved him from his sins. The man then said, 'I will proclaim it,—I will write it with my right hand, that JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD.' Oh what a salvation! Seven more struggled into liberty, and I have seen souls saved every night since. Lord, have mercy upon me! I tremble at the idea. I see what I am called to: Oh how shall I fulfil it!

"Give my respects to all friends; and pray for us, as we shall pray for you. I hope Mr. Miller and brother Clark are better. We shall be glad to see you next Monday or Tuesday week: the way is clear for you

in this circuit. We pray that you may come in the power of God. Amen!

"Your's &c.

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CIV.

To the Same.

"Nottingham, March 10, 1799.

"*My dear sister Barrett,*—I have heard of your sister's death, with tender feelings for dear John, and with joy on her account. She was the Lord's. Oh may I sit loose to all, every moment! The Lord is still with you. I will prise him. Go on, my dear sister; live much nearer the fountain; live in continual prayer and praise; love Jesus, and wait at his feet. Our fellowship with him may yet be a hundred fold more than it has been.

"I am waiting for my change. I wonder that I have not before now become so ripe as to have a stronger desire to depart and to be with Christ my Lord. O my leanness! I am lost in shame when I see the promises, many of which are not yet fulfilled in my soul. Lord, give me faith! I am more than ever given to prayer and enjoy intimate friendship with my God.

"Souls are saved here almost every day, but we still look for a greater shower. I have information from many places in the kingdom of a great work, from Cornwall in particular. Things seem to ripen for a general work. The Lord hasten the glory!

"Now, my sister, you are earnestly intreated, by preachers and people, to make this your next place; every door is open. The Lord be with you, and we shall once more rejoice together. I am persuaded you would come to Nottingham immediately, if you knew the call; but I think, you are not persuaded of this. Do hear us for once, and let nothing hinder. Can you possibly be here before May? Let me know, and fix the time. Must any person meet you at Leeds or elsewhere, and when? The Lord send you soon. Our chapel is large and well filled. All the people are simple,—waiting for blessings in every way. Do give our kind love to brother Barrett. I have never lost my love for him since he came to help us at Preston. May the Lord bless him in body and mind! I will pray more for you than I have ever done. O! pray for me in every place.

"Your's with the greatest respect,

"Wm. Bramwell.

LETTER CV.

To the Same.

"Nottingham.

"*My dear sister Barrett,*—The Lord is with us, humbling and saving souls. I thank him for his love to us all. I would for ever sing and praise his precious name. The Lord is my portion; he enables me to walk in nearer union. I am waiting for my change till he comes. I am all weakness. Indeed, I see nothing will do, but a continual dependance, and a living upon his mercy,—and Oh the depth of mercy! Lord, help me and all the chuch to receive that *mercy!* It is continual prayer that brings the soul into all the glory.

"The work goes on: some blessed showers have fallen in Nottingham. We are going to build another chapel. The effusion of the Spirit is great and powerful.

* * * * * * * * *

Many of the places are all alive, but some few are still low. Oh! may your soul join in praise. Mr. Lilly is wholly sanctified,—a wonderful change! His wife also is quite happy. I took the fever and was oppressed under it six days. Oh why might I not then have gone? You remember the publican near Eastwood: He and eight more have begun a class at his house; they are quite serious.

"I have received letters from Yorkshire, intreating me to use my influence with you, that you may never preach more frequently than once every other day. They say you are dying.

"A blessed work broke out in Leek circuit. All that country entreat you to come. I have never yet been convinced that you acted right in leaving. I have said nothing, because the Lord is wiser than all of us. I want you to be in your place, wherever it may be, or in whatever circuit. If you believe, will you come here and to the neighbouring circuits immediately? I ask you in Christ's name. An answer to me directly will ease my mind. God bless you! Give my love to the preachers and all friends. "Your's &c.

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The subjoined letter contains some useful and striking remarks to preacher of the Gospel, desirous of performing aright the important duties of his calling.

LETTER CVI.

To Mr. Z. Taft.

"Thorner, near Leeds, Nov. 9, 1801

"*My Dear Brother,*—I received your letter with comfort to my mind, and pray that you may continue this freedom with me. I trust we shall

derive some blessedness from our union in Christ. You are right in taking Mr. S —— with you in every action for the Church. In this you will be calm and confident in your labours. I would advise you to write a strong invitation to sister Barrett, who is now at Manchester, labouring in all the chapels in union with the brethren, and, I trust, with much profit to many. This must be done with Mr. S.'s concurrence, or she will not come.

"I rejoice at your determination, that nothing shall take from you that which, of all other things, is the most useful to a preacher, — the real life of God. You may read, write, study, and receive all knowledge, — and yet retain the liberty of the Gospel. This is consistent with, — '*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.*' It is quite necessary for us to be *workmen*, in order to convince the Churches that *life* is neither *ignorance* nor *sloth*.

"Hold no meetings altogether public, except preaching. Dismiss all who choose to go at the appointed time; and then meet the Society, or have a prayer-meeting, as you may think proper. Rise early, and, wherever you can, have morning meetings. I wish you to improve in every way. Another thing I would say, — form no connexion with any woman, till you have fully made up your mind that you can marry her. — Be a man of God, a weighty man of God; whatever you may receive, be equally as earnest for more. Present our kind love to brother S. and his dear partner. May the Lord bless you all! Amen.

"Your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

In the letter addressed to Mr. Angrave, a venerable christian, at Hoton in the county of Leicester, Mr. Bramwell reminds his aged correspondent of the many happy meetings, which, during his stay at their house, they were accustomed to hold early in the morning before the rest of the family arose. Those were often felt to be most powerful and refreshing seasons.

LETTER CVII.

To Mr. John Angrave.

"Hull, May 30, 1804.

"*My dear father in the Lord Jesus,*—I was comforted in hearing of you and the family. I believe you continue in the same way, and will '*mind the same things.*' I have often been edified in reading St. James, especially in that part in which he describes the Father of Lights as being '*without variableness or shadow of turning.*' Oh what a God! What truth, — what certainty of receiving the full salvation! He knows how liable we are to mistrust, — and has accordingly discovered himself in such a way as to remove all doubt from every mind. I hope your faith

is much stronger. Never forget this proper way of life. Fix your mind, and live in the constant act. Argue yourself into this way. Remember, you have had servants under you who obeyed your orders; and if God speak, who or what shall not obey? All is yours, and you may have your all. Take any part, but still endeavour to obtain the whole. Continual prayer will bring the grace for this purpose. Knock often, knock hard, and come boldly. Do not say, 'I have been morning and night,' but several times, yea, '*seven times a day call upon him.*' Oh this prayer, this faith, this God, this heaven!

"I hope my dear mother, Mrs. Angrave, will meet me when all our sorrows end. A little time longer, and the victory will be ours. I cannot forget our early morning services; God was truly with us, and he will now be with her. Our Heavenly Father overlooks a thousand weaknesses, and saves the humble in spirit. The Lord be with her, and bless her with the greatest salvation. May all your house be devoted to God, and all your children fear the Lord! How can you praise him, how can you love him enough!

"The Lord is with us here. I may say, numbers have been saved. There is a good purging, and some planting amongst us. In the meetings in general some are saved — and all nearly in the same way. My wife lives much nearer the Lord, and helps me in the work. I must say to you, that I am less than ever; yet I feel much increase of the power and love of God. I shall meet you shortly, to part no more. The Lord direct us in all things for his glory and the good of the church! Do give my kind love to the preachers.

"I am Your most affectionate friend,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The two following letters were addressed to one of his particular friends at Scot Hall Mills, near Leeds. Mr. Bramwell strengthens his hands in the Lord, and describes in an admirable manner the blessedness of religion.

LETTER CVIII.

To Mr. Wm. Burrows.

"Hull, Nov. 27. 1805

"*My dear Brother*, May grace and mercy be multiplied to you and your family! I have thought of you almost every day. — '*Great is the mistery of Godliness,*' and great is the mystery of Providence! We know little, and we frequently practise less than we know; this is our great loss. But Oh the forbearance of God! How unwilling to destroy us! How ready to pardon, to bless, to cleanse us from all sin, — yea, from all the evil nature; He is never weary with comforting, and filling the souls of his children. I wonder at his love, — his great work of love to

man. I am more than ever astonished at God and his dealings;—his ways are past finding out. Salvation ought to be our delight, and how to be saved to the uttermost. Oh how great the dishonour to his name, even for one moment to disbelieve! I am more and more shocked at the idea of unbelief! Death and darkness, the world and sin, are the immediate effects; while life and light, heaven and holiness, are the effects of faith. I hope you are going on, striving, running, fighting, and believing; and that you are a weak man made powerful, a poor man made rich, an unhappy man made to rejoice evermore.

"My dear brother Burrows, what are you? where are you? I hope you are all alive, lying at the feet of Jesus, saying, 'What is my next work, Lord?' You see the glory, you know the promise, and you have proved that God is true. Never faint; 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand.' God will come, yea, he will shortly come for us. Be ready every moment for the joy of your Lord.

"Never sink with others; it is our greatest glory to stand, even alone. I bless God, I grow in grace! I live in union with Christ, and am much nearer the throne. I am more than ever persued by satan: I fight daily and hope to overcome. I see the Lord working in this circuit more than at the beginning; but the work is not general. Souls are saved; but, Oh! I want to see much greater things. I never had greater power in preaching. Pray, pray, pray, for me.

"I hope your family are well,—Mrs. B. your sons, daughters, &c. Distress and affliction are in many families in Hull, and I feel on this account more than ever. Our kind love to all your dear family, especially Josiah. The Lord bless him and the whole house.

"I am yours most sincerely,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CIX.

To the Same.

"Hull, Dec. 16, 1805.

"*My dear Brother*,—I duly received your's. When I passed by you, I had nothing on my mind but good-will and much love to you. I was quiet pressed for time, having engaged with a preacher, to save expence in my journey. My soul is ever drawn out for you and yours, for I know the conflict you must have, every thing considered. But if you continually live to the Lord, in humble love and prayer, God will do all things well:—we shall see his glory.

"Mrs. Hemsley, the bearer of this, is a woman of God. I would have you invite her to your house and meetings. God is with her. She comes from Bridlington Quay, and has been with us at Hull. I wish you could come to Hull on the 4th of January. On the 5th I shall be in the town, and until the 18th. I want much to see you.—My wife and

children are well, and send their love to you all. I am more than ever in union with God. I see souls saved, but the work is not general. I see good, but not so much of it as I have seen. I never had greater power with God in preaching. Pray for me, and come at the time appointed. Give my love to Mrs. B. and your dear children. O live to God more than ever! Write to inform us when you will be here.

"I remain, your's in much love,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

In the next letter Mr Bramwell displays the affectionate concern which he felt for his christian friends, by whom he was always most affectionately received. It is addressed to a friend at Boston, near Throp Arch, who entertained the preachers when they went into that part of the Wetherby circuit.

LETTER CX.

To Mr. Burnley.

"Sunderland, March 20, 1807.

"*My dear Brother,*— It has been upon my mind for some time to write to you; for I do not forget my friends. No; I find increasing union with them, and sometimes greatly desire to see them, that we might wrestle in prayer for each other, and receive great power from the Lord to pursue our way. A little time longer and the battle is won; we shall, I trust, fully overcome through the blood of the Lamb. Evil nature must be destroyed, and the Lord is able to effect its destruction. He who made the world with a word, can save with a word; and nothing but unbelief can prevent our full salvation. O how sweet, how calm how quiet, when all the war of sin and evil is over! I hope your soul will live in this view. Pray, O pray, my brother! Never,—no, never quit your hold. Time is nearly over; and if all the glory belonging to this fulness of God be lost, it will be lost for ever. I am astonished that we do not pray much more, and believe much more,—yea, that we do not live every moment as on the brink of the eternal world, and in the blessed expectation of the glorious country. I hope you will pass through things temporal with your heart fully fixed '*on those things which are above.*' When cleansed from sin, we seem just beginning to live: And then to have the mind always stayed upon God, never distracted by earthly things, then to 'grow up into Christ our living head in all things,' nothing seen or felt but him,—all things in him and to him;—this is Heaven begun on earth. Our glorious dispensation should lead us to think, to consider, to pray, to praise, to wonder and to adore. what are we? The Lord save and keep us in all his truth! and may we increase with the increase of God!

"I thank God for all the kindness I have received from my friends at

Throp Arch. I should love to see you, and partake of the comfort of your house for a few days, as a resting place after much labour. I pray that salvation may ever be with you and your partner. Tell Mrs. Burnley, it is faith in God that will lift her up every day; yea, it will elevate her above all anxious care; and yet she will continue in every proper act for you all. The Lord ever be with her, and strengthen her mind in prayer! I hope she frequently pours out her soul in that room which she so kindly prepared for us; and, if so, the Lord will meet her and '*supply all her need from the riches of his glory by Christ Jesus.*' Nay all the children have much grace! The Lord teach, and save them from all evil!

"The Lord is doing a great work in this circuit at the present. Our souls are growing. My wife has got a class, which flourishes. John is well. Oh how we should love to see you come in, some day, to stay a little, your horse would soon bring you. Give our kind love to Mrs. Burnley, Miss Wright, our Ann, James Pickard, Mr. and Mrs. Heath, and all the friends. I should be glad to receive a letter from you. The Lord bless you all!

"I am your affectionate brother in Christ Jesus,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The following letter, as well as a subsequent one, were addressed to a worthy fellow-labourer who died at Plymouth Dock last year. The hope expressed at the close of the first letter has long since been realized: they have "met each other before the throne of God." Mr. Samuel Taylor was a minister zealously devoted to God, and rejoiced in the success of the gospel. He communicated these letters a few months before his sudden removal from this imperfect state of being, which was caused by an inflammation of the bowels: and he bore a most honourable testimony to the character of his deceased friend, many of whose letters had been received by him, but, unfortunately, they had been mislaid.

From the mention here made of his Life and Times, it appears that Mr. Bramwell had written a work under that title, the publication of which, he was apprehensive, would not have been well received, even by the religious community to which he belonged. Several of the preachers, however, are of a different opinion,—they consider its destruction as an irreparable loss to the world. Upon this subject, Mr. Grulter remarks, "I greatly regret that Mr. Bramwell's Journal is no more. Such a fund of piety, and of pure and christian simplicity will scarcely be found in the world; and I believe this conjecture of its contents is well authorised by that character of uniformity which his heavenly life confirmed."

LETTER. CXI.

To Mr. Samuel Taylor.

"Sunderland, 1807.

"*My dear Brother,*—I received your kind letter, and have been too long in my answer. I was glad to hear from you, and to find that the dear little family are all well, and that the blessing of our God is upon you; I pray that this may continue and increase more and more. I wonder at the goodness of God. 'His mercy endureth for ever.' My wife and John are well; George, Ann, and William, are also well. I employ my mind in praising the Lord, that they all continue so well and content in their different places.

"Mr. Gilpin has been laid up nearly three months; but is now recovering. Mr. Rought is well, and blest in his labours. Cook's chaff flies away. About forty soldiers have been converted, and a number more are leaving their sins and beginning to meet in class. A hundred persons have joined us this quarter, and I have seen a hundred in society justified.

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"A new and large chapel is proposed to be built at Durham. Several places in the circuit which have had preaching once a month, are now wanting it once a fortnight. We have to preach three times in Sunderland, and to the great congregation the last time. A fourth preacher is in contemplation; which, will, I rather think, be carried this quarterly meeting. We shall then be a fortnight in Sunderland, and the same time out in the circuit: but, when out, to be so as to come home on the Saturday evening. Can you tell me of a proper person? We have too young men, who are both written for, and will be proposed at the quarterly meeting. They are Everett and Farrer,—Everett to London, but I think not for the London circuit;—Farrer to the Hexham circuit, Douglass having gone home.

"I am afraid, my brother Taylor, that Hull is sinking. I have some reasons for my fears. Scotland is no better, but rather colder. I undestand that Leeds has nothing particular. In Sheffield a crowd hears Mr. Newton, but as yet no work is perceptible. There has been no work at York or in Yorkshire, since Conference,—I mean no extraordinary work. At Liverpool, there was a shower for a few days, and some drops yet fall.

"One thousand three hundred pounds were subscribed in London the first night for Lambeth. Dr. Coke was sent for to procure powers for the preacher sent home from the Islands: but Mrs. Coke being laid up by illness in Bristol prevented that work.—I do not know where the Doctor is. I want to know, as I have been told he means to come to Sunderland and Newcastle this year.

"I wish you could forgive me again, and write to me soon.—What do you think? Should I dispose of my LIFE AND TIMES to a printer to publish? I believe the things contained in it are true; too true to publish. I beg the favour of your hints on this subject, and they will weigh in the balance with me.—I never was more in love and in union with God. I hope to be ready to meet you before the throne. God bless you and my dear friend Griffith and his family! Amen and Amen My wife and John desire their love to Mrs. Taylor and all the children; and you are desired to send us ALL ABOUT each of them. Pray do so.

"I am your brother, as ever,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXII.

To Mr. Armitage.

"Durham, Dec. 2, 1807.

My Dear Brother,—"Very little out of the ordinary way has transpired with us since I saw you, excepting the enlargement of our chapel, with others which are building. We have been in a bustle with these, which are not quite finished, but will be in the course of a fortnight; and then great things are expected to take place, as our congregations have been much scattered. I wish every thing here may answer our expectations. All the seats are let, and many more than can be had would be taken, though the chapel will be large in the extreme. The preachers are well, and all united; we meet together every Saturday, at one of the houses, and things are quite comfortable. I am certain that there is much more real religion amongst us, than amongst any other sect in England, and yet the preaching of sanctification, and living it, are much upon the decline. How this is to be remedied, I cannot tell. It must end in something bad, if this glory cannot be restored. I mourn, I lament to see it. O Lord, make bare thine arm, and save us. A number of persons in this circuit have clearly received the blessing lately; and numbers more are athirst for it; but to receive it BY FAITH ALONE, this is the difficulty. I mean, we can scarcely persuade them, that God will do it.

"I hope, my dear brother, your salvation and the full salvation of dear Sarah lie near your heart. I hope you improve time, especially in the morning. O how satan will tempt you to lie in bed these cold mornings, when you should be at your prayers and in your study every morning at five o'clock, or before. By this practice, what wonders you would do with God, with the word, with your soul, and for your family! O, arise, my dear Armitage! You will soon be gone. Salvation is nearer than when we believed. Remember Fletcher, who was changed from a lion to a lamb. God will be with you. O be a wonder in Leeds

—a wonder for preaching, yea, for the salvation of men. I pray for you and plead, that all your tempers, words, and works, may from this time be pleasing to God, and that he may say at last concerning you, 'WELL DONE.'

"I never felt more of the power of religion. I never lived so near to God. I never was more ashamed than now. What have I done? What have I seen? Nothing, nothing, O Lord Jesus! I wonder that I have been suffered to live or to speak. O Lord my God, save me, even to the uttermost. Prayer, never-ceasing prayer, brings the glory; and the more we see of God, the less ourselves appear. I do hope to be with God my Saviour shortly. I never saw glory more desirable. I long to be with the happy spirits above, and to join them in praising God and the Lamb for ever. Beg, my brother, yea beg of God, that I may live to him. I never was more tempted: Satan roars against me. I cannot please him; I cannot submit or yield. 'The Lord reigneth.' Amen.

I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The following letter, like many others addressed to the same individual, is calculated to rouse all the latent powers of the soul, and to engage them in the service of the Saviour. Mr. Armitage, according to the presentiment of his revered friend, is spared to spread the sacred fire after Mr. Bramwell has been recived to glory.

LETTER CXIII.

To Mr. Armitage,

"Sunderland, 1806.

"*My dear Brother,*—You should use every means to improve yourself in understanding, zeal, and compassion, so as to be moved to tears for a ruined world. Plead with God with all your soul for *full* salvation. I know you may have this, and let nothing hinder. All things, you know are now ready. Get all your nature moulded into love. Lose self in God, dwell there. In your preaching, discover, by every word and look, the strongest affection for the congregation. Let every thing declare your earnest desire for their salvation. Shew the greatest respect, and keep from every thing harsh. Say strong things, but let your edge be smooth. This will make all men love you, even if they do not leave their sins. It will also preserve your influence with the people.—'Christ carried the lambs in his bosom.'

"Have the power to 'become all things to all men,' and always look upon yourself to be their servant for Christ's sake. Let all your example be holy. Be much with God, and your face will shine. Let all men see the new creation. I not only want you to be a *Christian*, but to receive *the fulness of God.* Live in your dispensation. You may be spared to

spread the sacred fire. I am confident much more prayer may be practised, and to greater purpose; in this I receive every day a greater portion of good. I see, as it respects myself, that I never stood in greater need of praying without ceasing. Write to me soon, informing me of your state temporal and spiritual. In the mean time, believe me to remain "Your affectionate friend and brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The yearning tenderness of a father is apparent in every line of the following letter. What simplicity and faithfulness are manifested in all the advice which it contains!

LETTER CXIV.

To his son William.

"*My Dear William* — I have thought much of your situation since you left us; but am most concerned for your salvation. However, I am persuaded that you may make improvement in learning, which is very desirable. Will you consider this, and inform me how you are determined on this subject? If you find a thirst for learning, it will stimulate you to improve all your time. You will feel a pleasure in rising every morning at four or five o'clock; you will also improve all your vacant time in the evenings.

"Your mother is recovering. I thought, at one time, I might in all probabilty have to inform you of her death; but the Lord seems to order her recovery. God is wise in all his ways.—I want to see all the family fully prepared for a meeting in glory. I have had much thought of you all for many years, and still pray that every child may receive from God the clearest witness of salvation. What do you think, William? Have you conviction on your mind? Have you any serious thoughts of joining God's people? Will you give your father great joy in your conversion? O do write me all your mind on these subjects. I pray that your way may be made plain in all things, for this world and for glory. I am Your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

How affecting and judicious are all Mr. Bramwell's letters to his only daughter! What intreaties he employs in stimulating her to cultivate her mental powers! and in what a lovely manner does he depict the religion of Christ when he describes it as imparting a polish to all literary attainments, which, under other circumstances and an influence less hallowing, are too often *hindrances* rather than *aids* to the growth of true piety.

LETTER CXV.

To his Daughter.

Sunderland, June, 1808.

"*My Dear Ann*,—I received your letter, and I do assure you it is always most refreshing to my mind to hear from you. I hope whenever you feel drawn to write to your dear father, you will not fail to comply. As it respects your salvation, I would have you remember the Lord Jesus. Read of him, his life, and his works. Every day let some portion of his blessed word dwell in your heart. I have often wished to know the views which your translations in French and the comment produce. I think you may at times translate those notes, and endeavour to find out the spirit of them. I would have you read a little in Mr. Fletcher's works, with some of Mr. Wesley's sermons.

* * * * * *

I will also buy Mr. Wesley' philosophy for you.

"You need no one to teach you. If Miss Wright and you were privately to employ one half hour in the day, you would soon make great progress in your grammar. If possible attend to this; but if you cannot rise early, I know you will make nothing out, and this will require you to go early to rest. I hope you will improve in every way at the present; let nothing hinder, be determined. Join prayer with every thing, retain your union with God, and increase in it.—You may have all evil purged from your heart, and may be cleansed from all sin. This blessing may be received through faith,—the same way as you received the knowledge of pardon. My dear Ann, be a soul devoted to God; live above this world of vanity, God will then be with you and bless you. Amen.

"Your affectionate father,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

CHAPTER XIX.

Remarks on Politeness and the doctrine of Experiments.—Letters to various Friends.

The counsel addressed by Mr. Bramwell to all the young preachers with whom he corresponded, tended to excite within them holiness of heart, advancement in useful knowledge, and a due regard to all the decencies of civil life. To the latter duty Mr. Bramwell often directed the attention of his young friends; but being an accomplishment in which some men of the world greatly excel, it is more liable to be overlooked, by pious persons, than any of '*the weightier matters of the law.*' Yet if virtue itself, according to the ancients, appear the more amiable when invested in a form that is comely and pleasing, propriety of behaviour and a certain gracefulness of deportment must be of some consequence to every individual, and of considerable importance in the common intercourse of social life. They calculate wrongly who suppose, that naked truth and sterling integrity cannot be maintained among men without a precise stateliness or stiffness of manners, which often renders those virtues more repulsive than inviting; neither do such persons reason more justly when they imagine, that truth and integrity will not succeed equally well when they are associated with the softer graces. But the same HIGH AUTHORITY which has commanded all men to '*repent and believe the gospel,*' has also enjoined them to '*be courteous.*' The religion promulgated by our blessed Saviour, is eminently that of love, benignity and kindness, and has a softening influence on the natural obduracy of the heart of man. When the subjects of it are not rendered more civil and obliging than they were before their reception of it, the effects which it was designed to produce on their minds, have been neutralized. The venerable Mr. Wesley was accustomed to observe, that he never knew an instance of the grace of God being received into a man's heart and cherished there, in which its transforming power did not soon manifest itself by a change in his manners; for if he had formerly been a clown, his behaviour became that of a GENTLE-MAN, in the proper sense of that compound word; and if he had been in the higher ranks of life, his politeness assumed a greater air of good will and sincerity.

The character and conduct of such a frank and faithful man as Mr. Bramwell, have been egregiously mistaken by that person who has imagined that, with all his openness and sincerity, he was not in every respect what a Christian ought to be in affability and good-breeding. In mixed companies, his address was at once dignified and engaging; and his usual demeanour in a family was polite and agreeable. While there

was in his general behaviour no perceptible abatement of the serious and benfitting manners of an ambassador of Christ, he knew how to unbend his mind among his friends by interesting converse and innocent cheerfulness. In all this, there was no appearance of the finical punctiliousness or the obtrusive ceremony of a fine gentleman; but his attentions possessed an easy *complaisance*, accompanied with an evident *wish to delight and profit* those who were near him'—qualities which constitute the very essence of real and unconstrained politeness, and secure the esteem of all within their influence. He studied the Bible as an entire system; and the more he understood its several parts, the greater beauty and uniformity he discovered in the whole. He was therefore accustomed to consider the neglect of a courteous and winning conduct on the part of any man, as an act of disobedience against the expressed will of heaven, and was careful, as it regarded himself, that '*on his tongue should dwell the law of kindness*.'

While referring to the study of the Bible as a whole, it may be proper to state that Mr. Bramwell has been frequently described in his ministerial character as only '*a son of thunder*;' but he thought it was as much prescribed to him in that sacred code to act in the capacity of '*a son of consolation*;'— and in the latter qualification, according to the judgment of many enlightened friends, lay his principal excellence. Every christian minister is in his line of duty when he declares to the people '*the whole counsel of God*;' and it is only when he sees some glaring neglect to have previously existed in making this general declaration that a judicious dispenser of the truth of God will adict himself for a season more peculiarly to the enforcement of some points of doctrine or practice in which such neglect had occurred. On this principle Mr. Bramwell acted, when, in some circuits to which he was appointed, he found repentance and conversion had been seldom explained or but feebly enforced; those doctrines had then a peculiar prominency in his discourses and often produced very salutary effects. At particular periods, too, he saw it necessary to advert to them with the same marked peculiarity:—Thus, in letter 61, after a severe illness, he says, "I never had so clear a view of the torments of the damned. It was shewn to me most clearly, that the terrors of the law of the Lord are not attended to in our preaching, so much as is necessary; and you may depend upon it, this is one cause of our leanness. The world must be made sick; they must feel the need of Christ.—Since my sickness I have had uncommon enlargement in preaching, and never saw greater effects." In tendering his advice to Mr. Drake' (letter 62,) he urges him to try a consolatory course of preaching till the Conference. He adds, "Sometimes we must beat; but that is a rare case. Dwell much on the love of Jesus."

LETTER CXVI.

To Mr. Moses Dunn.

Liverpool, Feb. 14, 1809.

"*My Dear Brother*, I was glad to receive a letter from you, I hope your present situation will be attended with much consolation to your own mind, and with much success in the salvation of souls. The Lord has placed you with a most kind Superintendent, who will feel for you and keep you in every way. Your manner of preaching, praying, &c. will rouse the people; and God will increase your number,—he will deepen his work in the hearts of his children. Let souls lie near your heart. This will cure every thing. It will make you read, study, improve time preach, and labour. It will cause you to rise early. It will make you do all you can every day. O the importance of salvation, even in one person! I wonder we are not a thousand times more alive to God. The blessed Apostle Paul could talk about his '*serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears, and teaching publicly and from house to house*,' warning rich and poor. You will find it your province to live to-day, and to leave your future state in this life with God and his Church; in this way you will be always happy, for '*God will provide*.' I would advise you to procure for your little library, Blair's Lectures. Read them much; and if you write some extracts from parts of that book, it will imprint them the more strongly upon your mind. *Shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed*.' Strive to acquire a pleasing and kind address. Never be ceremonious, yet never be awkward. Let love govern the whole of your conduct; let it be seen in all your actions. Be full of love.

"The great salvation is much neglected amongst us; but preach this at every suitable opportunity. Live in the witness of it, and confess it at proper seasons. You will find that some will oppose it;—take no notice of them, enter into no debate, but still go on with all patience. '*Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you. Never be weary in well-doing*; *You shall reap*.' I shall be glad to hear from you. Give my love to your companions in the work. I have seen many souls saved here, but I found our numbers much reduced during the first quarter. My dear brother Dunn, pray for me. Let us be always ready.

"I am Yours, as ever,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXVII.

To his Daughter.

"Liverpool, Feb. 11, 1809.

"*My dear Ann,*—I praise the Lord that you got well home. Your mother is recovered. All your relations are doing well. I do not know how you carried your bundle from Bradford; but you do not complain. There is no going through time, without daily trials; we may constantly look for them.

"I shall expect you to form your conduct and tempers by that blessed book, the New Testament. Make it your constant rule. God will be with you; all your ways will be directed by him, and every thing will be a help in the way to glory. To be pardoned, is great; but to be cleansed through faith, is greater: Look for this,—look in much prayer. Watch for the Lord Jesus; he will come. Six persons received this salvation in the bands the last evening. I have thought much about you since you left us, and I want you to be a burning light in your generation. Live for heaven every day. Live dependent upon God. Do let me have a letter concerning the progress of the blessed work upon your soul. I hope you rise at least with the servants. You will find it needful to study punctuation and composition, and to write correctly. Determine upon these acquirements. In teaching grammar you will much improve yourself in it, and confirm your previous attainments. Nothing will do you more good in that respect.

Ask the blessing of God upon all your studies; yea, turn all into the proper end. Now is the time for receiving wisdom and salvation. You must now lay a foundation for LIFE and for GLORY. Consider the vast importance of time, and it will stimulate your mind and produce every blessed effect.

"Do give our love to Miss Wright; I hope she will see the directing hand of Providence in all things; and that she will live to God for ever. May the blessing of the Lord be in the family; may all your endeavours be attended with success amongst the pupils; and may all who come under your notice have cause to '*praise you in the gate!*' Your mother and John, with your other relations, send their love.

Your very affectionate father,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXVIII.

To Mr. Everett.

"May 30, 1809.

"*My dear brother Everett,*—I have for a long time expected you would write to us, but have received no letter. I hope you are well, and com-

fortable in the work of God. Will you write me immediately, saying all things for my consolation? I feel you much upon my mind, and must ever reflect upon you with love and gratitude. I am of the same mind, and convinced that nothing less than the full salvation can make us happy, who live in such great light and privilege. How can we escape, if we neglect it? Shall we not fall, sooner or later? The Jews might reach a degree of glory, without it; but we are '*exalted to Heaven.*' I hope you feel the direct witness, that the blood of Christ Jesus cleanseth from sin, and that you are pressing into all the glory. Never loose your proper zeal; you may retain the whole of it without the extraordinary labor which I know was frequently above your strength.

"I wish you could be spared to see us a week. What do you think? Will your Superintendent see it proper? Or, with his good will, can you have a supply? My wife and John will, I believe, ever remember you in love. Mother has taken John to Mr. Ward's, and is just returned. God is with us; but we want to see much more. I am nearer the throne, blessed be God! Give my love to Mr. Wintle and to brother Hudson. "I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXIX.

To his Daughter.

Sheffield, Nov. 5, 1810.

"*My dear Ann,*—I received your kind letter;—and how did my mind rejoice to hear of your restoration to that love to Him who bled for you upon the cross! I know you will increase in it by continual prayer. I want you to be fully devoted, to live at your Lord's feet, and receive all instruction from his word and Spirit. To be saved from every wrong temper, to be saved into the mind of Christ and the image of God, and to live in rejoicing evermore,—this is your glory, your everlasting life. In this world you will be guided, protected, and comforted; and in your example you will be a blessing to all around you. You will find many pleasures in studying the Hebrew Bible, and sweet views of the economy of salvation. It will enlarge your mind! you will wonder and adore. The deep things of God lead the soul into the closest union with him; and you would not part with this union for all the world. It is heaven indeed, and glory begun below,—I know it is neither procured nor retained by the *number* of times of prayer; yet if you are fully in earnest, you will be often before the lord on your knees, pouring out your heart, and pleading with him till your cup is full and running over.

"My dear Ann, be a Christian,—I mean, have the nature of Christ, and live entirely to God. A little religion can never keep us happy; but much of it will make us comfortable, yea, in the midst of all things,

I pray for you; I long after you; you are constantly on my mind. The Lord *will*,— I am ready to say,— the Lord *shall* make you holy as he is holy. Miss Prince, I believe, is truly serious, and has begun to meet in your mother's class. Your mother unites with me in much love to you and Miss Wright, and to Mr. and Mrs. Burnley.

"I am your dear father,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The pious reader will, long before this, have noticed with pleasure how high Mr. Bramwell's consolations arose, "like Jordan's swelling stream." He appears to have constantly lived in the very gate of heaven; and if any one ever entered on the great work of his personal salvation as a warfare or conflict, that man was Mr. Bramwell. His progress was violently opposed by the powers of darkness, and he had good reason for using the expression here recorded, "Happy is it for me that God is Almighty, or I should be ruined!" His spiritual enjoyments, described in glowing and appropriate language, in almost every letter, were not the excited and effervescent feelings of a moment, but the fruits of permanent affections, which ripened into holy appetites and gracious habits. He could more easily have forgone the use of food for his body, than have suffered the absence of these comforts from his soul. Early and continual prayer, much labour and great self-denial, were the means, which, from his own experience, he recommended to Mr. Burrows and his other correspondents for 'filling them with all joy and peace in believing, and causing them to abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.'

LETTER CXX.

To Mr. Burrows.

"Sheffield, 1810.

"*My dear Brother*,— I received your kind letter, and am persuaded your remembrance of me is with much desire and prayer for my success in the blessed work of our God. I never think of you but with joy; I know that your views and practice in the great cause may bring upon you some suffering. Yet what is that, if, at the same time, you keep a good conscience towards God and man? Your salvation will still increase, and your love will abound; all your little difficulties will produce, under the influence of our Lord, a blessed harvest of grace. Every thing that takes place in the Church or in the world, sends us to prayer, drives us into the house,— I mean, unto our God our Saviour. You know what it is to live in that holy place.

"Entire sanctification is much upon the decline amongst us as a body; and will the general glory ever be restored? Perhaps never. What is

our business? To make the sacrifice of body and soul to God every day, to live in all the salvation, and to be ready to meet the world, judgment, and our God. May this be our state of soul — to live beyond all fear, all worldly joy or worldly sorrow,— for all to be of God,— all we feel, and say, and do.

"I never was so much within the court as at present. Continual prayer, a redeeming of the time, little bed, and much labor, bring continual rest. To be cleansed from sin, is much; but God, in great mercy, is filling my soul with love. I could sometimes shout, '*God is love.*' Satan strives every day; my life is more than ever a conflict and a regular fight. Happy is it for me that God is Almighty, or I should be ruined. My dear brother, live these few days of your life, O live for glory! A little while, and he will come. I should love to be with you in your house for a week; but that, I suppose, is your providential place, and this is mine. Pray, pray, pray, more than ever. Give our love to dear Mrs. Burrows, and to Josiah by name. I do not know how it is that he is so much upon my mind. God bless you! Write again soon. The Lord is working here. We had a hundred new members the last quarter. O that we may soon have the copious shower!

"I am dear brother, your's &c,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXI.

To Mr. Taft.

Sheffield, June 19, 1811.

"*My dear Brother,*—I am glad you are still doing well. I hope you and sister Taft will continue and increase in the gospel glory,— full salvation and all its fruits. 'Herein will your heavenly Father be glorified.' I have seen numbers converted this year: but the work is not very deep in the society amongst many. I never was so much given up to God, and never saw so much need of continual prayer. I do assure you, I find it necessary to begin at five in the morning, and to pray at all opportunities till 10 or 11 at night. My wife unites in much love to sister Taft. "Your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

Among other things, the following letter shews the deep interest which Mr. Bramwell felt for the salvation of his children. One part of it exhibits a beautiful family picture. "May all his children retain what they then possessed!" will be the prayer of every pious reader.

LETTER CXXII.

To Mr. Z. Taft.

"Jan. 26, 1812.

"*My dear Brother,*—I received your kind letter with a good likeness of Mrs. Taft, also the conversations with Mrs. Fletcher. I assure you, I am greatly obliged. I thank you for the kind remembrance. The portrait shall have a neat frame, and be hung over the fireplace in our new house, which is nearly ready.

"Your account of yourself and the work inspires me with gratitude, for I feel increasing love to God and his church. I often want wings to fly, and see you all,—and this visitation of the churches to be my business till I leave the body. But thy will, O Lord, be done! for as thou wilt, is right. My life is continual prayer. I rise early, wash all over in cold water, meet the societies in every place after preaching, stay all night amongst the friends, and find this is the way to receive and do good. I sacrifice my own bed, home &c., for the good of souls, and in this I am truly happy. Excuse my freedom, for my heart is full. God is all; I wait his coming, 'Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!

"The Lord has poured out his Spirit the last quarter; about 130 have been saved. At Great and Little Gomersall there is a revival, as well as at Little Town, Birkenshaw, and Brighlington. At Birstal several families have joined us. Many more are truly alive. We have such a Saturday-night band, as I have not known in any place. We have made it quite select; it consists of justified persons, and all have tickets. We are very strict, and it answers. Numbers have got into full liberty; a leaders' meeting is held every Thursday night after preaching, when all the preachers are at leisure, except the one who preaches that night to the congregation. All the preachers meet the leaders. So you see the Lord is with us, yet there is poverty in different places and this increases. When shall wars cease? God is scourging this nation. O that we may repent and be saved!

"Do give my love to Mr. Dunn, and Mrs. Dunn,—though unknown to me. Moses is a man of God, and I trust his marriage will not cause a decrease in his glory. I have written to brother Doctor to be with us at the Conference; but I think he is not so disposed. Every thing here would now quite suit him. The Lord knows what is best; therefore I am afraid of being anxious.

"Live, my dear brother, live for glory. You find this in your dear child at York. What a blessing! Nothing is equal to this; it is the next to our own salvation. A few weeks ago, our George was deeply awakened, and sent me a letter describing his state; his class-leader sent me another. O how it rejoiced my soul! In a letter a few days ago, John informs us he now loves God, meets in class, &c. William is in

society, and, I think fears God, but is not saved. Ann is with us, quite happy and much devoted to study. She has acquired a taste for the languages, and evinces a good capacity. — How shall I sufficiently praise the Lord! I should likewise have told you, that John Hargreaves has found pardon, meets in class, and is extremly steady.

"My wife and Ann unite in love to Mrs. Taft and yourself. I shall be glad to hear from you soon.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXIII.

To his Son.

"Birstal, Oct. 19, 1812.

"*My dear John*, — Our prayer is, that God, our protector, may continue to bless you, in this world and in that which is to come. This is my confidence; for I know, if he bless, none can curse; and if he do not bless, all things will prove a curse. It is my delight to give up all into his hands, and to expect all from him. '*He cares for us.*' I am astonished at such sayings: no mother can so much care for her children. To live in the fear of the Lord, and to make it our grand business to love and adore our Maker, are duties that become us who are dependent creatures. It is pleasing to God, that we discover our strong affection, by walking in his commandments. O how short is our time! How soon we shall be gone, and have to give a strict account to Him! How true it is that a change must be wrought! He must make all things new, and there is no reconciliation but through a Mediator. Christ unites the Father and us: we are one in him. I long for the heavenly country. 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!'

"Yours, most affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXIV.

To Mr. Sigston.

"Sheffield, 1812.

"*My dear Brother*,—I am exceedingly engaged in giving tickets, making collections, and with the poor and afflicted, and numbers of distressed cases. I suppose I must be with you at the Conference, unless Mr. Wood sees differently. I shall be content to go any where. You will, I imagine, only take one preacher. Will you not be too busy even with one?

"I am contriving to find out a way of praying more than ever: I think it possible. A day spent in continual prayer, brings the soul into nearer union. And if every day be thus spent, as far as possible, what an in-

crease of union will there be in a short time! Live with God, live in the utmost salvation, be willing to live or die any hour, and have all things ready.

"I look at Jesus. O how dead to the world, and how desirous of this world's salvation! To '*finish the work*,' was his business. I have often had it suggested, 'Finish the work appointed,' in whatever way. The world will steal upon us, if we do not watch continually. No man as a Christan should be found on the same spot of ground two days together. 'Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth, —unite these two together. The Lord loves to see it, and will bless it. Our love to Mrs. Sigston.

"Your's in Christ Jesus,

"Wm. Bramwell,"

For many years before his death, Mr. Bramwell seems to have been aware of the approach of Apoplexy, and to have guarded with all becoming prudence against its insiduous inroads upon his constitution. Having done this, he awaited its sudden attack, which in many cases is instantly fatal, with a cheerful dependence on the Divine Goodness and Mercy.

LETTER CXXV.

To his son William.

"Feb. 8, 1812.

"*My dear William*, — It appears a long time since I heard from you, and I now write to request some information concerning your health, and to receive from your pen all the news which you may think proper to communicate. And I shall be glad if you will send me an account of your real state of mind, as it respects the salvation of God; because this, after all, is the real business of life. We spend *a moment* to receive *an everlasting* Crown.

"I find rich and poor all in pieces when they are sick, if they have made no preparation for a happy death. I hope you see this to be 'the conclusion of the whole matter,—to fear God, and keep his commandments: This is indeed the whole duty of man. God will bring every work into judgment.' I think the description you gave me of Apoplexy is good: the preventives quite meet my views. I find great difficulty in keeping my body under,—just to live so as to be able to work. Any more than this tends to feed me exceedingly. I am much the same as before; have lost one tooth, and am losing another. The removal of these 'little pins' reminds me that all is going.

"I am your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXVI.

To Mr. Samuel Taylor.

"Birstall, 1812.

"*My Dear Brother,*—

* * * * * *

"There is such distress in some parts of this circuit as I never witnessed. I am poor enough, and must be content to remain so till the Lord is pleased to send deliverance. It is difficult to know how to preach, or how to act amongst the people. Numbers are turning to God but I fear the present extremity will prevent a greater spread, although it ought not.

"My coming to Nottingham would require your being in my place at this time; and I could not bear the expence, neither could I bear that the friends should defray it. This projected journey must therefore be abandoned.

"Mr. Edward Miller has had several epilectic fits, and is very weak. Mr. Elliot has had two strokes of apoplexy, but not severe ones. Mr. Nelson also is unwell, and continues in rather a weak state. I saw Mrs. Mather a few days before her death. She seemed to be quite ready for glory. I hear of but little done in Yorkshire. I should have been one of the ministers appointed to open the Halifax chapel, but could not go.

"O may we live every moment to God! I am striving more than ever to receive the whole salvation. It is good to grow, it is pleasant. '*I press toward the mark.*'

"The Lord be with you! My wife unites with me in much love to sister Taylor and the dear children. Give our kind love to all enquiring friends. Will you have the goodness to write to our Ann?

"I am your ever affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

It is a fact lamentably too true, as stated in the following letter, that many persons of the medical profession are confirmed Deists. Mr. Bramwell knew the cause, but did not deem it necessary to mention it at that time to his son.—It proceeds chiefly from the distinction bestowed in modern times on the doctrine of experiments, in all matters connected with Philosophy. The great Lord Bacon recommended this doctrine, in opposition to the mere hypothetical theories imported from the Ancients; and Sir Isaac Newton was among the first of modern philosophers to encourage the adoption of its principles, and upon them he founded the elucidation of his sublime discoveries. The range which experiment has since taken, is far beyond what Lord Bacon had ever contemplated: and, by it, the nicest results are now deduced from ob-

jects the most subtle and minute, many of which were once thought incapable of being subjected to tests of any kind. No harm could ensue from the adoption of this doctrine, in all cases to which it can with propriety be applied; but one of the greatest evils attendant on its use, has been, that it is sometimes carried beyond its legitimate boundaries by some *learned* yet *very ignorant* philosophers, who have most preposterously attempted to measure religious truth by the standard of experiments, and have demanded mathematical demonstrations in matters which are purely moral, and from which the comparative certainties of mathematical conclusions can never be inferred. One mode there is, and only one, in which philosophers can profitably employ the doctrine of experiments in the investigation of religious truth, and that is, by the experience of its saving influence in their own souls. This would afford them a species of demonstration far stronger and more convincing than the most refined conclusions from abstruse mathematical *data*. Happy would it be for many of those who assume to themselves the title of "the enlightened," if they would humble their spirits so low as to ask a greater portion of wisdom and light from Him who is 'the Father of Lights, and who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.'

The doctrine of experiments is of incalculable utility in the arts of life when it is restricted within its just limits, and principally confined to material objects. The greatest danger to be apprehended from its unskilful use, is on the part of young men destined for the profession of medicine, who, having for some years to be chiefly conversant with the investigation of the component parts, and the developement of the structure, of tangible objects, almost imperceptibly acquire, in such researches, a certain form of mental deduction, which if substituted for every other kind of argumentation, will hinder all just conceptions on moral subjects. Those young persons who have been previously imbued with enlarged views and right principles, will derive the greatest benefit from experiments rationally conducted: all others are liable to become materialists in theory and atheists in practice. Nor are there wanting some men, ranking high as medical characters and of celebrity in the learned world, who display an eagerness on all occasions to lead young students astray by their plausible arguments and the glare of their reputation. These men in exploding what they call "vulgar theories concerning spirit," overthrow the scriptural faith of some who look up to them as high authorities and it is no uncommon circumstance for a young man, on coming out of such schools, seriously to attempt a demonstration to his friends in the country, that "what has hitherto been erroneously viewed as the soul of man, is nothing but a mechanical concatenation of impressions from the brain and nerves," the process of which, he farther assures them, he can most satisfactorily explain. Vain task!—'Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth

sure having this seal, *The Lord knoweth them that are his* and *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity!* Well would it be for all such medical professors, if on their minds the mottos of this seal could make an indelible impression!

LETTER CXXVII.

To his son William.

"Gomersall, 1813.

"*My dear William,*—We are yet at Gomersall, and truly happy in our situation. The people are most friendly; and a number of the most respectable families are turning to God. Bristall is now one of the first places for its size, in Yorkshire. Some hundreds, in this circuit, have lately been brought to God.

"I have looked through the bible and Testament again, and am more than ever confirmed in the doctrines of Methodism. They embrace, I think, the whole truth;—both the promises and the threatnings, the mercy and the justice of God. Infidels leave out the justice, the penalty; and are all for what they call liberal. But, I am fully convinced, their liberality is not of God; it is only the religion (if it may be so called,) of a cow to her calf. Instinct, or natural affection, has nothing to do with Divine love. Divne love believes all things. It is the boast of Deists to deny Revelation, and to assert that one can perish. I believe you will never enter their lists; yet it is to be lamented, that in England, on comparing numbers, there are more of them found in your profession, than in any other. How is this? I suppose I can account for it: but to you it is not necessary.

"I am praying more than ever, that I may meet you all before the throne of God. Amen! "I am your affectionate father.

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXVIII.

To Mr. Mathew Cranswick.

"Birstal, May 5, 1813.

"*My dear Brother,*—I received your very affectionate letter, with much information respecting the blessed work of our God amongst you. Yet I desire much to have had a description of every child of your family by name. Oh how I used to love those dear children! I hope you will favor me with a full account of your own and J. Simpson's family, and likewise of our other dear friend your neighbor. I never felt so much love as at present, towards the church and toward all men.

"My wife is well and happy. George was awakened more than six months ago, and appears to be truly serious. Ann lives in the love of

God, is quiet happy, and is now with us. William and John are both serious and meet in class. O praise the Lord for evermore!

"We have had a most glorious work for some time in this circuit; between three and four hundred are brought in and most of them have found pardon. Our meetings, love-feasts, bands, &c, are the times of refreshing from God's presence. Not only the poor, but (strange to tell,) a number of respectable persons, and in some cases nearly whole families, are brought to God. O that this work may go on! Pray, pray, pray! It is continual prayer. I am now laboring to be ready. I want to have a good place before the throne. O how uncertain is every thing below the sun! What numbers near us have gone suddenly; and many are going off gradually.

"Live, my brother Cranswick, live to God. Ever connect those three duties, 'Not slothful in business — fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' You know how to effect this. It is by much devotion in the morning before you enter the world, and much watching when you are in it. Tell your dear friends, your neighbors to stand fast. We shall soon have done with all things here below; and the moment we expire, our place will be fixed to all eternity. I often think of this. Sanctification, full salvation, is the glory of our dispensation. Talk about it in your class, and in the pulpit. Enforce it, and plead that the people may all live in it. God will be with you; and though hell rage and men oppose, numbers will believe and be saved. I would see you immediately but cannot yet tell when I shall be able. Write soon—God bless you! Farewell.—I unite with my partner in much love to you all.

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXIX.

To his Daughter.

"Chelsea, Sept. 26, 1814.

"*My dear Ann*,—Having had some intimation by Mr. B. of your indisposition, we want much to know how you are. We have prayed for you, that the Lord may make this a blessing to your mind, and may give you patience under it, yea and that he make it as easy as possible. Your mother is well. I have had the Almighty God with me:—none but himself could have so enlarged my heart, and made the word a general blessing. I am now fully satisfied the Lord sent me here. I am labouring to be more than ever devoted to God, every day. Oh to be quite ready! and at all times; seek for this with all your heart. Be holy; live in all the salvation. Be much in prayer; be often there. God will save. We shall be together for ever:—the thought of this delights my soul. The Lord bless the family. He will bless you all. You shall be truly happy evermore.

"Your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXX.

To Mr. Thomas Pearson.

"London, 1814.

"*My dear Brother,* — We send our love to you and Polly, to Sarah and Ann, in this note. I shall never forget your habitation and the blessings received under your roof. I was in a similar state (if not much worse for two months) to that I experienced in your room, and often reflected on the comfort I received with you. 'Glory be to him who sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb for evermore!' All is well: Our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things. I hope you now live a witness of full salvation.

"Your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXI.

To Mr. Johnson.

"London, May 8, 1815.

"*My dear Brother,* — I should have written much sooner but could have no certainty respecting my seeing you at Conference till after our District Meeting. I have now to say, that I hope to be with you at that time, if my most comfortable place has not been taken up through my delay. I have very frequently had an opportunity of enquiring after you, and I have been made acquainted with your loss of Mrs. N. But how rejoiced was I to hear of her salvation! This was every thing, for a blessed eternity. I hope Mrs. N. has made proper use of this heavy affliction, by giving her all into the hands of God with sweet resignation, being always ready for the eternal weight of glory. The Lord grant unto her the full salvation in Christ Jesus!

"I have had a severe affliction, but have for some time been strong to labour. Oh may I always be ready! I am full, and now wait for my change. O that I may stand fast in him, and depend upon him who is my Lord and Saviour. Great changes in the world; but yet much, very much to do. The Lord knows how to remove mountains, and none but himself. Let us '*pray without ceasing*,' and more than ever call upon his name. Plead, yea wrestle with him, that you may stand complete in all his will.

"I am your's affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXII.

To Mr. Thomas Crowther.

"Chelsea, June 8, 1815.

"*My dear Brother,* — Respecting my stay in London, I never was more blessed in preaching and never more happy in my soul. We had a number saved last Sabbath; it was a day of God to many, and we had truly a shower in Queen-Street chapel. Such is my station, that I have a fear of grieving God by leaving. Yet the faculty say, that I shall have a return of my rheumatic disorder in winter if I stay. I sweat much in preaching, and having to return home in that state, I shall not be able to stand it. So that I am at a loss what to do. Yet, I do believe, the Lord will shew me. I have begun to make request, and he still hears prayer. O may we live to him who governs the world! May we live for eternity! "I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXIII.

To Mrs. Habgreaves, Sen.

"Wesgate Hill, July 27, 1815.

"*My dear Sister,* — I reached Westgate Hill on Tuesday, and was disappointed in not finding you at home. Yet I hope your journey will be good for the body and mind. This will certainly be the case, as it respects the soul, if you continue in prayer and thanksgiving. To praise God for all events gives liberty. It brings with it great consolation, increases the heavenly union, and strengthens the affection towards the Saviour. For if there be the least dissatisfaction with his government, if the least opposition to his will, the soul is disturbed, and some little breach of the heavenly fellowship ensues. When '*Thy will be done,*' comes from the heart, it brings glory with increase. This is to live in God; he then lives in us. In this, our love is made perfect: then we with all boldness look at the Day of Judgment! O may he give his fulness to us!

"I have for some time found myself taken up into God, and all things on earth drawn with me into himself. This is done by acts of faith. It is by this I do see and embrace him, and am taken up by him. '*My life is hid with Christ in God.*' I never felt so dependent. I can do nothing without him; and if at any time I feel, no reflection, that I have acted separately from this close union, I am ashamed,— I grieve, and mourn. I dread making the least attempt, if he is not fully with me. Sometimes I have striking views of God, his Being and works. Sometimes I enter within the city, and live for some moments in a blessed fellowship with the glorified. '*Faith is the substance of things hoped for.*' Faith makes

God and glory that to me which is promised. I strive for more; and without daily pleading, I should sink and die. Prayer is more than ever necessary: — here I live, and only in this. My dear sister, if we suffer with him, we shall be glorified together. O the hope of everlasting life! let every thing be done, every day with an eye to this. Be all light, love, patience, and hope. You will be lifted up; fear not. To be cleansed,—to be filled with him, who is all light, all glory,— to be changed into him with increasing glory, — this is our privilege. Then we rise. We shall reign, we shall be forever with the Lord. Go on: make some progress daily. God will fulfil all his promises, — they are 'YEA AND AMEN *in Christ Jesus.*'

"Dear sister, yours affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXIV.

To Mr. Turnell.

"Newcastle, Sept. 6, 1815.

"*My dear Brother,*—I was truly glad to hear from you. I had been meditating on my leaving my dear friends in London with deep concern; and in looking over the different places and persons, the love and kindness which I had experienced greatly affected my mind. Amongst other things, I reflected, with much satisfaction, on the happy moments I spent at your house, and with dear Mr. Pickford, and the blessed seasons I had at Mrs. Montimer's. I shall never forget the fellowship with God which I enjoyed, and with the spirits of those righteous persons who lived in a habit of serious devotion. O the pardon, the purity of heart, the free salvation, and the heaven of God's love! — the enjoyment of these is beyond all earthly arguments. God is with you and with us; let us greatly rejoice.

"My station continued for London until nearly the close of the Conference, when my dear partner was taken so ill that for some time it was a doubtful case whether she would recover. I have left her at my daughter's considerably better, yet not out of danger. 'Father, thy will be done!' On my coming to this place I received, (in my first sermon) extraordinary power from God, and in my second and third I also saw blessed effects. I hope we shall see good days. The work is with my God, who hath hitherto helped me. May I ever praise his holy name!

"Mr. Zachariah Taft is in the next circuit. Mrs. Taft was engaged the last Sunday night in addressing an astonishing crowd. The power of God shook the congregation. God is with her indeed. What shall we say to these things?

"I hope you will be able to read this; my hand will not suffer me to write as well as I formerly could. The Lord, it is possible, may give

me to see London again. Continue to pray and praise. The ever blessed God be with you for ever!

"I am your's affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXV.

To Mr. Pearson.

"Newcastle, 1815.

"*My dear brother*,—Having an opportunity by Miss Rhodes, I send you a tune, 4 lines, common measure, which was sung in praise to God many times when we had our extraordinary work of God in the salvation of souls. My wife is much better since the last relapse; I do hope she will continue.

"I have just been at Shields, and saw a shaking through the chapel. I was much struck in visiting a class-leader there; he is in great affliction, but getting better. He said to me, that four days ago he was in heaven: I suppose it might be a dream. I asked him, why he did not stay there: He replied, he was told that he was unfit for the holy place, and must come back to earth to be made fit. He is now in an agony for a clean heart, that he may be fit to remain in heaven, when he has the felicity of entering within the gates into the celestial city. We had a number saved on Sunday in the lovefeast. We expect great things. The Lord pour out his Spirit upon us all, and 'cleanse and keep us clean!' I never in all my life had such a constant view of eternity; and, three weeks ago, I received a deeper baptism than I ever received before. I wait for the Lord with longing. Pray, O pray! It is worth so much! What is so beneficial as a whole night spent in prayer? 'Pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.'

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXVI.

To Mr. Stones.

"Newcastle, Nov. 10, 1815.

"*My dear brother Stones*,—I thank you for your letter;—God is with you and will be with you,—and you are so much assured of the truth, and the power, and the work of God, that if the angels cried 'WILD FIRE,' it would have no effect upon you. You would, without saying one word to your adversary, proceed, just as your Lord had done before you. 'If an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed.' I say to you in confidence, neither St. Domingo nor Senegal willdo for you; you would soon be melancholy. It must be others, if any; and

you must stay with us, to keep, if possible, a little spark alive, for entire sanctification is nearly extinguished. I intend to fight as long as I can breathe.

"At our first meeting here, six or seven found peace with God. In our second love-feast a crowd: — all was suspence for an hour: I was in a secret agony; all at once the power of God went through the whole and there was a general distress. In about an hour thirty persons were delivered, and there was such an effusion of glory for about two hours, as I have seldom seen; gusts of praise ascended to the throne of God. I cannot forget what my soul felt at that meeting. Many have since been saved. In Newcastle we are yet waiting for his coming. 'Come' Lord Jesus, come quickly!'

"Give our love to Mrs. Stones, and to Mr. and Mrs. Nelson. You must get clear in sanctification. Mr. Jackson has received it, is quite clear in it, and confesses it boldly. I do not write so well as I did, but yet so as you can read. I shall write to Mr. Dawson in a few days. Write to me very soon.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXXVII.

To Mr. George Smith.

Newcastle, Nov. 16, 1815.

"*My dear Brother Smith,* — I promised to write to you, and have found it on my mind so to do this day, the 16th of Nov. Our love-feast in Newcastle was attended with much good. Several found the forgiveness of sins. Our second meeting was at Corville, when the crowd consisted of the society only, for none else were admitted. For nearly an hour there was much looking, praying, &c.; yet great suspense till, quite suddenly, we saw by the effects the power of God go through the place. Conviction appeared on every side, and cries for mercy were heard from numbers. In about an hour and a half, not fewer than thirty-six persons found deliverance. Glory filled the place. I myself was filled with love. Numbers stood up with faces of joy, declaring what God had done for their souls. I believe very few were left in darkness, except some who were groaning for redemption; and numbers have received it since. We will 'praise him while he lends us breath.' I hope we shall have a more general work. We have got a blessed select band, at Newcastle, on the Saturday night. Several have received full salvation.

"I want much more of God. I long, I pray, I cannot rest without the smiles of God. We shall soon have done with preparing for glory. We must lay up every day. God grant that we may have a full reward!

I hope you keep up in faith and patience, labouring for souls. Do you see any bruised? do you see any healed? Pray, pray. God will hear. God will bless you. Get a weekly meeting at Pickering; I mean a band. If you begin with only three, have it quite select. God will increase you; salvation will come. He must answer your agony of prayer. My wife has had several relapses, but is just now better. Give our love to Mrs. Smith and write soon.

"I am your's affectionately,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXVIII.

To Mr. Sigston.

"Newcastle, 1816.

"*My dear Brother*,—"I am glad to hear that your chief concern is to secure the salvation of your own soul and that of your family, and to do all the good you possibly can. Will not the Lord perform his covenant? Will he not make known his glory, and change you into it yet more and more? Will he not give to you and your's all the blessings of his love? You know there is much more to come, yea, a being filled with the Spirit, with the mind that was in Christ. Grow, my dear brother, grow in grace. Live a moment, to secure an everlasting crown.

"I am labouring to live as near to God as any one I have ever known, yea, as near as Saint Paul himself. I read more frequently his character, and study more closely his deadness to the world, his zeal, his love to souls, his labour, his being always ready for his change, and his desiring '*rather to be with Christ.*' But I am more than ever convinced, that, to accomplish this, I must redeem time to the uttermost: I must sleep no more, eat and drink no more, than nature requires; and this calls for daily self-denial, such as I believe our Lord meant in his Divine Instructions. The Testament, the Book of God, is more precious than ever. I read it, and am lost in wonder, love, and praise. My brother Sigston, I find that to be cleansed from sin is one thing; but to be filled with God, is much more. Dr. Clarke's note on that expression, '*the fulness of God*,' never leaves me. I do beg, that we may have all that the Lord has promised. Do not tarry, my brother; run into all the salvation; and may I meet you in one of the first places in heaven.

"We have a blessed work in some parts of this circuit. I hear of good in other parts of the kingdom, but the sound of distress is heard from every quarter. Ireland is in a convulsion, and England on the rack. God is angry with us; HE will punish, and we deserve it. But, mark, it is all from HIM: I cannot look at *second causes*. I look at the rod, and see who has appointed it;—but '*the end is not yet*.' May all the church now shew their patience! This is the time. I am sure, if this were the case, God would shorten these days.

"My wife is better. Give our kind love to Mrs Sigston and the children. The Lord be with you.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

LETTER CXXXIX.

To Mr Turnell.

"Newcastle, Dec. 23, 1816.

"*My Dear Brother,*—I promised to send you a letter by a friend some weeks ago, but was prevented. I received yours with gratitude, yea with joy. I perceive the Lord is with you. You continue in the love, the perfect love. O that the whole church had received this blessing! Why not? '*because of unbelief.*' Shall we ever see the day when this great salvation shall become general, when we shall again be of one heart and one mind, and 'only love possess the whole? I am glad to find from your letter, and also from others, that a work has broken out in the charity school, in answer to prayer. If the brethren act with proper wisdom, I have no doubt of its spread. The Lord give those persons all power, love, zeal, and caution, in this great business! Amen.

"Mrs Turnell will find help from the Lord! He will bless her in the work. She must not fear, but be more than ever in prayer. Tell my friend Ryland, I expect to meet him shortly in glory; we shall then feel the immense benefit of full salvation. May we receive a full reward for ever! The Lord bless him in all his classes.

"I must tell you I am given to prayer more than ever. I feel myself just on the brink of eternity, and am sensible I can change nothing when I am gone. This idea being so much with me, I am working with all my might. We have a work of God in some parts of this circuit, and a number are saved; yet there is no great increase in Newcastle. O the distress!—but all can be borne in God. His judgments are truly abroad. May they have the desired effect! My wife is better in her health, and, I believe, lives near the Lord in blessed union. I am in expectation of reaching my crown before Conference;—but the will of the Lord be done! If I remain on earth and able to work, I shall be at liberty to go wherever my good brethren choose to put me,—whether it be East, West, North or South. O may the Lord be our guide in life, and give us triumphant death! Do write soon, and believe me to be,

"Your affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

In the following letter Mr Bramwell alludes to the practice of many persons uniting together in prayer, at a certain hour, for obtaining an answer to some particular request, though at a great distance from each

other. This man of God knew the wonderful advantages of this practice, and on many peculiar occasions engaged some of those who had great power with God to join with him in this profitable exercise.

"O wond'rous power of faithful prayer!
What tongue can tell th' almighty grace?
God's hands, or bound, or open are,
As Moses, or Elijah prays."

LETTER CXL.

To his Daughter.

"Newcastle, Feb. 1817.

"*My Dear Ann*,—Your mother is considerably better, she now feels but little pain. It is possible with God to make her strong for a season. I have not much to communicate, yet it will afford you great satisfaction to hear that your mother is recovering. I pray that she may continue to do well. A number of us have agreed to retire a few minutes three times in the forenoon, and three times in the afternoon. I want you to join me in this way of prayer, in which you will find the blessing of God with much increase. There are some means which cannot be used, (if in the Spirit,) without a great harvest; and we shall soon have to give up our account with great joy. The blessed work is going on well at Corville: I was there last night. I have fixed with our local preachers, to have preaching in the out-parts or poor places in Newcastle There will be twelve different places of this description, where there will be preaching at the same time every Sunday evening after preaching in the chapel. I think I have had the suggestion from God, and I hope to see much good amongst the sinners,

"May the Lord be with you. He will be with you. May you and your kind husband do all you can in laying up a great number of petitions for the children; they may be answered when you are in glory. May we all be together for ever! Amen. Your mother very much wants to see you. Yet we will submit to the judgment of the family. You know what it will be prudent for you to do;—and christian prudence is always beyond my natural feelings. The Lord will direct you.

"Your affectionate father,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The next is a letter of condolence to two friends on the death of their beloved daughter. The sentiments contained in it prove how well Mr. Bramwell was qualified to pour the balm of consolation into the hearts of the afflicted.

LETTER CXLI.

To Mr. T. Pearson, Jun.

"Salford, Sept. 27, 1817.

"*My dear Brother,*—I believe you and dear Polly are lovers of the ever-blessed God, that you have believed in him, that you agree with every dispensation of his Providence, and that it is your settled opinion that Jehovah is infinitely wise, and that no error can be found in the proceedings of the Almighty. Yes '*He does all things well*' in heaven above and on the earth beneath. Yet after all your confidence respecting his proceedings, after all your love to the Saviour, after all he hath done for you, after all his kindness in your salvation, and in all supplies for body and soul, you may be tempted to suppose that HE may deal severely with you. O no! you were his children, Sarah was his own. He loved her and has richly provided for her:—she is in glory, and will wait for you to be with you for ever. I know your feelings: I have felt the same. I went through it. I drank the cup. I felt the pangs; yet the Lord said, '*All is well.*' *What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter.*' He will say the same to you in your sorrow; you will look up and say, 'All is right.' Yea, every tear will raise you to an act of resignation. You will drink the cup with thanksgiving, whilst angels sing above, on Sarah's possessing glory. You will see by faith her place before the throne, and will sing to God the Saviour. I do assure you, I am so satisfied with the dispensation, that whilst I weep with you, I rejoice on her account: for I began to contrive in my mind for her future situation, and, with all my contrivance, I trembled for her. In this I see the wise hand of God. She is where I wanted her to be,—she is saved. Glory, glory, glory be to God, and to the Lamb. You cannot '*sorrow as those without hope.*'

"Be ready, Polly, be ready,—cleansed from sin, filled with God, Live to him more than ever. Nothing on earth is our own. We are Christ's, and all we have belongs to him. Shew yourselves a man and a woman of God. Shew your love, your patience, your hope, your gratitude, and your zeal for God, for the good of many. All will shew you, that God is love, that he loves both you and yours. Nothing brings greater glory to God than a behaviour so consistent with all the acts of the Almighty, especially his act of taking the beloved of our souls thus suddenly away. What a blessed company! what a glorious sight! What a fulness, what delight! I am lost in desire. I cannot, otherwise I would, fly to behold the glory. I would see your dear Sarah in a moment. I would leave all to be where she is. May I every day be an observer of the place, by a living faith! May I always possess the evidence of things not seen. May I realize the situation, and die to be triumphant in everlasting bliss. You will give our love to Ann; and

tell her from me, to love the Lord, to pray much to be ready that she may see her sister again. I hope Ann will be truly religious, that she may be a comfort to you both, and live with you for ever. My wife unites in weeping with you, yet she is persuaded that all is well, and shall be well with us all.

"I am your affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

The four interesting letters which are subjoined, were addressed to Mr. B. Wilkinson, of Sheffield, one in whose friendship Mr. Bramwell delighted, and with whom he had long taken sweet counsel concerning those things which are most excellent.

LETTER CXLII.

To Mr. B. Wilkinson.

"Chelsea, Sept. 22, 1814.

"*My Dear Brother,*— You may have thought hardly about my not coming to Sheffield, but I hope you have considered my situation. I do assure you, I had as much as I could bear, and was obliged to get away as quickly as possible to preserve myself from over much sorrow. My feelings are such that I cannot help it. I wonder at my coming here, and for two or three weeks I experienced such agony of mind on account of it, as I cannot express. Yet I durst not object, because I thought I should never have been proposed, if the Lord's hand had not been seen in it.

"I am praying without ceasing, and am fully convinced that I am in my place. God is with me indeed. O what shall I say? I must spend my short day to his glory. I never was more tempted. It is suggested to me every time I go out, that it must be my last sermon, and that I must relinquish preaching and settle somewhere. O the violence of hell against me! Perhaps the Lord will shew mercy to me, and lay me aside. '*Father, thy will be done.*' May I drink the cup of trembling, until I see thy glory.

"We live at Chelsea; and I like it much, for several reasons: it is quite open, and my wife has hitherto had her health when not confined. We shall go but little out to dine, which is my great liberty. The situation being nearly at the extremity of the circuit, makes my walks a little longer; but our work is not very laborious. I have had some extraordinary seasons, and many persons have been set at liberty. I have found a number of persons whom I know. J. B. is in good repute, as well as other men of God of my own children. '*Salvation is of the Lord.*' I want you to write to me immediately, and let me know all things. I hope Mrs. Wilkinson is better.

"I have no doubt but I shall see you here, the coach comes in such

a short time, and the accommodations on the outside are so agreeable. We left Leeds in the morning at seven, and were here the next day at noon. The Lord Jesus make your way to us once more before we enter glory. My wife unites in much love to you and Mrs. Wilkinson. Give my love to Benjamin and his wife.

"I am yours as affectionately as ever,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXLIII.

To the Same.

"Newcastle, 1816.

"*My brother Wilkinson*,—In your last letter I perceived that infirmities grow fast upon you. — You begin to feel that you cannot work as you once did. Your body will shortly return to its native dust, and your spirit to God who gave it. Salvation should now swallow up our desires. To be with God in glory for ever, should animate our souls. We may yet have a burning fire in these old bodies; and the fire may so enliven, so quicken us, that sometimes 'whether in the body or out of the body, we cannot tell.'

"We may still be witnesses of the all-cleansing blood, witnesses in our latest moments of the fulness of God, witnesses that we have fought the good fight, — shouting, 'He is come; the Lord is come, to carry us to glory, — glory for evermore!' Our short lives shall be prayer. Praying, we will yet be in an agony, we will yet look up; yea, we will live, and every day live to Him. He is our God and will not leave us. Satan is conquered; he falls before us; we stand on the necks of our enemies. The Lord grant that you may in your latter days prove to all the power of God, the love of God, the faithfulness of God, yea the great salvation of God. Happy! happy! — always rejoicing,— never complaining, — never teased, — still believing,— still a glad countenance, — yea, ever appearing to all the same. O that God may fill your mind more and more with love, joy, and hope of glory. Amen, Lord Jesus! I am waiting; be you always waiting, that we may be close together in glory, world without end. The very thought fires my soul, as I write. What! to be together for ever, yea, for evermore! O the place! the company! the glory! the employment! the praise! Amen and Amen.

"I am yours most affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXLIV.

To the Same.

"Newcastle, July 19, 1817.

"*My dear Brother*, — I am still looking up, — waiting for all the will of God, and never ceasing to cry to him. I often think, I grow but slowly. This perfect union with God in Christ, is my constant aim, and to be changed into the same image. Time is less and less with me, it is a moment! Good God! why do we dwell on earth? Surely that we may receive a much brighter crown of glory. Faith in God is the most noble principle; it honours God, it rejoices angels, it rebukes devils, and it lays this world in ashes. I want much increase. The blood cleanses, the Spirit fills, the Divine nature is our boast. It is heaven. Live, my brother Wilkinson, live for ever! Your body grows weak, you tremble; — the tabernacle will shortly fall; let the soul be quite ready for its flight. We shall have thousands to welcome us; they are waiting. I long to be amongst them, when we shall meet yonder, yea, when we shall meet to part no more. I mourn, I am grieved, I sorrow, to see so many thousands left behind, in darkness. O that I could persuade the world to come in! Well might Jesus weep over Jerusalem! I frequently look at the Son of God in that situation. O what he felt, what he saw respecting their final ruin!

"We have astonishing numbers of failures amongst our friends in this part. I never before saw it in this way; and the distress increases. When shall the extremity be over! The nation has merited the judgment. It has such an effect upon my feelings, that I am constrained to cry mightily to God. If I indulged in the excess of my feelings, it would destroy my poor body.

"Your ever affectionate brother,

"Wm. Bramwell."

LETTER CXLV.

To the Same.

"Salford, April 10, 1818.

"*My dear Brother*,—I write to you from a continued union of Spirit, and from a mind impressed with a consciousness of the past mercies we frequently receive together. Our God was with us,—pouring out his Spirit, and making glorious manifestations from his throne. We have reason evermore to praise God for the salvation. I have always found him true, and he shall be our guide even unto death. My soul draws nigh, and cleaves to him. I do believe, I shall receive much more of his image. All his promises are sure. O what a sweet view had I yesterday, of all that Christ has purchased for me!—May I receive from him every day, and be filled with all the fulness of God!

"My wife gains strength, but has just escaped death. Such is the wisdom of God, and such is his love to his children! I believe she never enjoyed such fellowship as at the present. I think she is raised up to receive a brighter crown; there are many mansions in everlasting glory.

"We are all doing well in the circuit, but I have weights to carry with which none but the Lord and myself are acquainted; but I want to do the will of him that sent me, and in my call to finish the work. O that I may be always ready to meet my Lord! I long for this! The conflict at Leeds is suspended; Ireland is all division, and the great work is going on in England. As to Missionary meetings,—O how I mourn and groan before God! The Lord shewed me at the beginning that the manner of them was not from heaven, and I cannot unite; I dare not. In this I must be singular. What shall I do?

"Your ever affectionate brother,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

The following letter written by Mr. Bramwell, and sent to the Superintendant preachers throughout the Connexion, and though well received by some to whom it was addressed, produced from others expressions of disapprobation.

Those who were in habits of intimacy with Mr Bramwell, know that to differ in judgement from his brethren, was always painful to him; and they will readily acknowledge that nothing but a powerful conviction of indispensable duty could have induced him to address the following circular to the Preachers. He shuddered at the idea of the Methodists becoming a dead and formal people, destitute of the power of godliness; and he believed the most effectual way to prevent such an awful catastrophe was to preserve the ministry pure, zealous, and uncorrupted. It was his opinion, that if ever the glory should depart from the Methodists, the principal, if not the only cause, would be a spiritual declension among the preachers. Under these views he wrote; and he must have thought that he had discovered some alarming deviations from the track marked out by the primitive Methodist preachers, before he could have brought his mind to dictate the contents of this epistle. Although Methodism has spread in a manner which, in all probability, was never anticipated by its early propagators, yet the apprehension of Mr. Bramwell respecting it continued to the day of his death.

LETTER CXLVI.

Sheffield, Nov. 10, 1796.

"*Dear Brethren*, — My mind has been so deeply impressed with the present state of our Connexion, and I feel such an anxious solicitude to avert every impending evil, that I am compelled to break through the barrier, which my deference to your superior judgement would create,

and faithfully, yet affectionately, to make this one solemn appeal to you all.

"I have long been penetrated with the liveliest sorrow, at perceiving an evident decline of that burning zeal, that active perseverance, that vital holiness, that lamenting love, which actuated the first Methodist preachers; and which enabled them victoriously to triumph over every obstacle. Having their hearts filled with a sense of the important undertaking, the fire burning in their own hearts, and swallowed up by love for souls that were bought by the Redeemer's blood, they scorned to lose a moment in disputing about external forms; they deprecated every strife, but the noble strife of excelling each other in enlarging the Redeemer's kingdom. Alas! my brethren, we have entered into their labors,—but have we retained their spirit?

"At the last Bristol Conference, the Lord made a great offer to many of the preachers; some received it, but by others it was rejected.—An attempt was made at the Manchester Conference, privately and publicly, to set the Revival in a true light, and to restore vital godliness among the preachers: in several this had the desired effect!—Before the last London Conference, we had encouragement from several of the senior brethren, that a strict investigation of the preachers' experience would take place;—but nothing was done. We are fully satisfied, that it is not church-government, or any other outward form, which causes the present agitation and division; but that God has a controversy with us as a body. We want the power of religion among ourselves. This alone can perpetuate the union of love, and then all things would be done in peace and harmony.

"When were we asked the state of our souls, since we were received into the connexion? We may be proud, passionate, envious, malicious, covetuous, self-willed, brawlers, and triflers, given to jesting, yea, tiplers;—we may oppose the real work of God, may turn hundreds out of the way,—and yet remain traveling preachers.

"Whatever we are when we enter upon the great work of the ministry, we may lose our first love, zeal, faith, patience, hope, yea, every grace,—and yet go round the circuit, carrying about *the ghost of a preacher*, 'who being dead, yet speaketh.'

"Brethren! brethren! is it not time that something should be done to reform ourselves? Have we not for years been laboring for forced unity, and eternal peace, debating on forms and shadows, and thereby departing more from our centre? And could things be brought into unity this way, would it not settle us in formality, and unscriptural stillness? Must not the cause be removed before the effects can cease? The axe must be laid to the root, and then our preaching, conversation, and example, will produce, under God, the principal and effects of faith and love, and we shall all be one in Christ Jesus,

"It has been one rule with several of us for years, '*to speak evil of no man.*' We are also as decidedly against what is called Ranterism or Wildness, as we are against lukewarmness or dead formality, and against all kinds of noise in public or private, without the Spirit's influence; and we believe there may be a formal noise, as there may be a formal stillness.

"We have laboured by doctrine, conversation, and example, to distinguish between the precious and the vile, and our manner among the people will evidence this truth. But we have seen, in numberless instances, that if a preacher does not give his whole heart and action to the work, he has no power in the Revival. If a preacher be truly alive to God, he may, in every circuit, prevent false fire, intemperate zeal, and carnal noise,—and yet be a means of preserving the operation of the Spirit, in awakening, pardoning, sanctifying, and filling with that love which produces every good word and work. But violence against the effects of the Spirit, creates violence in the subjects; and the consequence of this is prejudice, debate and opposition, which destroy religion both in preacher and people. One preacher labors with all his might to bring souls to God,—the next in turn destroys what God hath wrought.

"We tenderly call upon every brother, to read, once more, Wesley's Journals, as well as David Brainerd's, Thomas Walsh's Life, Gillies's Historical Collections, and Edward's Evidences. Compare these with the Acts of the Apostles, and the whole with our present mode of proceeding,—and then determine, whether we have not departed from the simplicity of the Gospel. And we entreat every brother to join us in continual prayer to God, that the life and power of true religion may be increased in all our hearts, that we may all be filled with the fulness of God! "I am your affectionate servant,

"WM. BRAMWELL."

CHAPTER XX.

Miscellany, consisting of Anecdotes, Sketches, and brief Notices of Mr. Bramwell.

The following account of Mr. Bramwell is communicated by a friend at Salford:

"The first time that I had the unspeakable pleasure of seeing Mr. Bramwell, was on the morning after his arrival in this circuit; he called upon me to accompany him to the house prepared for his reception. We entered it together; and such earnest, pious, and holy breathings to him who alone can bless, and sanctify our habitation, issued from his lips, as I shall never forget. On the following morning, his boxes were brought by the wagon from the Newcastle circuit. He stood for a short time at the door, but finding himself unemployed, and ever wishful to improve the fleeting moments, he walked into a neighbouring street, and visited several poor families for the purpose of conversing with them about their eternal interests. One person was then deeply convinced of sin, became truly devoted to God, and, I have no doubt, will, in eternity, be 'a crown of his rejoicing.'

"I shall never forget, while memory lasts, my accompanying him to a small place in the circuit called Oldfield Road. God was eminently present during divine service, and a heavenly influence accompanied the word of his servant. Mr. Bramwell, anxious to secure the full effects of this influence, intimated his intention to meet the Society that night. I accordingly gave him the class-paper, and after calling over several of their names, and putting the most pointed questions to them, he addressed himself to a poor woman, who for many years had walked in the clear enjoyment of the smiles of heaven; he fixed his eyes steadfastly upon her, and asked her the state of her soul! She appeared rather confused, and could not reply for grief, when he said to her, 'Woman, you have lost your evidence.' She burst into a flood of tears, and confessed that it was so:—'And you have lost it this week! She replied,—'Sir, I have!' 'And you have lost it this week in a passion!' She acknowledged this to have been the case. He then began to pour into her mind the consolations of piety, fell down upon his knees, and agonized with God in her behalf. That night the Lord restored to her the joy of his salvation. Is not this an illustration of that passage of scripture?—'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.'

"Another illustration we have in the following singular circumstance, which I had from Mr. Bramwell's own lips. When he traveled in the Liverpool circuit, a pious young woman, a member of the Methodist society, (her prospects being but gloomy,) felt an anxious desire to go to

her friends, then living in Jamaica. She accordingly took her passage for this Island; her luggage, provisions, &c. were taken on board, and she fully expected to sail on the following day. As she exceedingly revered our deceased father, Mr. Bramwell, she deemed it her duty to wait upon him, that she might have the prayers of one who, by faith had such power with HIM

'That rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas.'

"Mr. Bramwell at first gave her the greatest encouragement to go, and began earnestly to plead with God in her behalf; but, stopping suddenly, he thus addresssed her: — 'My dear sister, you must not go to-morrow, God has just told me you must not go.' The poor girl was surprised; he, however, persisted, and prevailed upon her to postpone the voyage. Mr. Bramwell exerted himself to get her luggage out of the vessel. The ship sailed; and in about six weeks, intelligence arrived that the vessel was lost, and all hands on board had perished.

"One very eminent trait in the character of Mr. Bramwell, was a *love of prayer;* and it is said, that, on particular occasions, he would spend whole nights in agonizing with the Great Head of the Church for a blessing upon his people. I had a proof of this in our own circuit. At Davyhulme, we had sung several hymns and prayed twice with the family before we retired to rest; when we got into the chamber, he went into a corner of the room, and such fervent supplications I have never heard before. For twenty minutes the burden of his prayer was, — 'O God, bless this circuit, — O God, bless this circuit!' He then prayed in the same manner for the leaders, then for the members, and this continued for nearly two hours. He then got into bed and when he thought that all were asleep, he crept out of bed, and again began to pour out his soul to God. Prayer seemed to be his delight! He literally lived and '*dwelt in God.*'

"As we were returning home the following morning, he related to me a singular anecdote, which was, in substance, as follows: — Some years ago, when travelling in the mail coach from ———, there was a gentleman inside with him. Mr. Bramwell wished to introduce spiritual conversation; but finding the gentleman an entire stranger to subjects of a spiritual nature, and without any relish for things heavenly and divine, he suddenly put his hand upon the gentleman's knees, and said, 'Sir, I think this is a piece of *new* cloth.' — *They are not new but old breeches*, replied the gentleman; — *what made you think they were new ones?* Why,' said Mr. B. 'because they are not worn any at the knees!' The gentleman looked at Mr. Bramwell's, and, perceiving that they were quite threadbare, asked him the reason, Mr. B. told him, that it was occasioned by constant prayer. The mind of the gentleman was instantly seized with powerful convictions; he owned that it was very proper

to make our grateful acknowledgments to the AUTHOR of our Being,—a sentiment which Mr. Bramwell improved by a few appropriate and striking remarks, every one of which seemed like a nail fastened in a sure place by the Master of Assemblies. The gentleman began to pray, and the Lord soon made him the happy partaker of the '*joys of his salvation, and the comforts of his free Spirit*;' and he is now, I believe, a distinguished ornament in the Church of Christ. Will not this man in the day of the Lord Jesus, '*rise up and call him blessed?*'

"As Mr. Bramwell went one winter's day to a small village in the circuit, to preach, he called at the house of a friend, and while they were sitting together, Mr. B. began to make some very serious enquiries, in reference to the state of the work of God, and asked if it had not been once much more flourishing in the village than it then was. His friend replied, that this was too true, the work had formerly been much more prosperous, but, owing to a great number of backslidings, it was at that time very low. He proceeded to mention many persons by name, who once had been ornaments to their profession and a glory to the church of God, but who were then wandering on the barren mountains of sin. Mr. Bramwell seemed to listen to this lamentable account with no remarkable interest, but immediately afterwards went out, (not telling any one where he was going,) and called upon several of these poor exiles, praying with them, and exhorting them, with tears, again to return to God. One person, a female, whose name had been mentioned, lived at some distance in a bye-place, across the fields. The weather was inclement, and the snow covered the ground; but the cold winter's blast proved no hindrance to this holy man of God in the prosecution of his labours of love; the ardent zeal which he possessed, raised him above every consideration that was merely of a personal nature. He approached the house of this poor unhappy backslider, and went into the yard. The woman observed him standing there, and not knowing who he was, went out to make some enquiries, when, with tears in his eyes, he thus accosted her, Pray, have you seen a poor lost sheep come this way? — She replied, 'No, Sir.' — Why, rejoined Mr. B. a poor sheep has strayed from the fold and I was told it was somewhere in this direction. The poor woman, self-condemned, then began to perceive the meaning of the parable, and uttering a dreadful shriek, immediately fell down on the ground, and in all the anguish of sudden remorse, cried out for God to have mercy upon her soul. She was taken into the house, when Mr. B. prayed with her, and God was pleased in great condescension to heal her backslidings.

"I recollect as I accompanied him one dark winter's night to a small village near Manchester, he seemed to be more than usually drawn out in his reflections upon the starry heavens, and dwelt much upon that passage of the Psalmist, 'When I consider the heavens, the work of

thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?' After making several astronomical observations on the revolution of the different planets, and the harmony of the whole, he broke out with enthusiasm into a rapture of praise and admiration of the wisdom of God displayed in the works of creation, and particularly in those more sublime and distant works,— the stupendous machinery of which, and their relation to each other and to our world, are known only to Omniscience. I was silent for sometime after he had ceased, when he again exclaimed 'O for a closer fellowship with God! Brother, why should not you and I be as holy as David, serious as Jeremiah, zealous as Paul, and as loving as John? And why not live as near to God as John Fletcher did? Could we but be favored with the company of Mr. Fletcher to-night, to Irlam o'th' height, [the village to which we were going,] you should take hold of one arm, and I would seize the other, and we would ask him some delightful questions about the grandeur of the kingdom of heaven. O! what glories would he describe to us! while 'our hearts would burn within us on his talking with us by the way.' May God make us ready to see the King in his beauty; and to behold the land that is very far off, the glories of which are beyond the feeble grasp and comprehension of the human spirit.'

"I must here relate an instance of that Christian feeling for the afflicted which dwelt within his breast, and was an actuating principle of charity and benevolence. I mentioned to him the distress of one of my brethren, a local preacher. Mr. B. appeared feelingly alive to this poor man's situation; and when I got home, I found that he had sent me a parcel, accompanied with the following note:

"My dear Brother,— Will you be so kind as to forward this old coat to the poor brother whom you mentioned to me this morning, and you will oblige Yours affectionately,

"Wm. Bramwell."

"N. B. Please not to mention it to any one."

"Upon enquiry, I found this to be the same coat he was wearing when I told him of this poor man's poverty and affliction."

Extract of a letter from Mr. Reay, near Newcastle-on-Tyne:— "The depth of Mr. Bramwell's piety, and his very extraordinary spirit of prayer, were far above all that I ever knew in any person but himself. But there was one trait in his character which was generally overlooked, I mean his (I had almost said) 'perfect' knowledge of men and things. Of business in general he had very proper views, and his calculations on the probable success of any mercantile enterprise were extremely correct."

Extract of a letter from Mr. Joseph Sutcliffe, one of Mr. Bramwell's valuable and esteemed fellow-labourers, dated Chapel-house, South-

wark, Dec. 30, 1818: — "The year I spent with Mr. Bramwell in the London West circuit, was truly a year of union of spirit with my colleague. We spake and thought the same. But, in this great city, he sometimes complained of feeling a slight degree of the fear of man; yet I believe he soon forgot it as he grew warm in the pulpit. I heard him at Lambeth chapel on these words, 'If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth,' and assuredly his Master was with him. Every sentence seemed to be a stroke of light, and was accompanied with the power of God. I know not that it is possible for a minister of Jesus Christ to be more at home than he was in that sermon. But it was in this circuit that his Heavenly Father was pleased to call him to enter the furnace of affliction. He was attacked with the rheumatic gout, for twelve weeks during the winter. His pains day and night, for two months, were so excruciating, that he could not sleep. It was a time in which he was called to exercise all the faith and patience he had long preached to others. And he did exercise them; for in him the passive graces, on that trying occasion, often appeared to great advantage. Every time I saw him, his confidence and language were such as I would wish to possess and to utter in the pressure of great affliction. His pains one day happened to cease rather suddenly, which naturally would inspire him anew with the most devout and grateful sentiments; and his soul became at that time so happy that it seemed to him, for the space of half and hour, as though Christ and his angels came and filled the room. The effects however of the disorder were such on the body, that he did not fully recover from them all the succeeding summer."

Mr. Barnsdall, a class-leader, and a Trustee in the Methodist Society at Nottingham, has kindly favored us with the following Rules which were drawn up by Mr. Bramwell for the regulation of their conduct in public prayer: —

"*First*, — Never let more than one person pray, or be heard to pray at the same time.

"*Second.*—Let all in the congregation who feel what they utter, at the close of each petition say AMEN!

"*Third.*—Never sing praise till the person engaged in prayer has concluded.

"*Fourth.*—Persons in distress may be spoken to by others, at the time of prayer; but with a low voice.

"*Fifth.*—When a soul is saved, (whether it be justification, sanctification, or backslidings healed,) whoever becomes acquainted with the circumstance, let him make it known to the preacher, or the person who conducts the meeting, that the singers, with the whole congregation, may give thanks.

"Abide strictly by these rules, dear brethren; and from the New

Testament, the practice of the primitive church, and thousands of matters of fact, we are ready from the pulpit and the press, or in private conversation, to vindicate your work in the Lord.—Nottingham, 1799."

"Extract of a letter from Mr John Morris, Itinerant preacher, dated Ashton-under-Line, Jan. 16, 1818; addressed to Mr. William Oughtred, Tockets, near Guisbro':—"Being so near Manchester, I often visit there. I took dinner and tea with that man of God Mr. Bramwell, about three weeks since. I never knew such a man in my life. After dinner, I went to him in the study; he immediately enquired into the state of my soul. I told him my present experience. 'Now,' said he, 'we will pray a little.' We kneeled down together, and remained in that posture for near two hours. Oh what power and comfort did I then feel! The Lord drew near to us, in all the strong attractions of his grace, and I was ready to think myself in heaven. Mr Bramwell frequently said, 'Lord, I am in heaven.—Lord what art thou about to do with me?—Oh! what numbers of angels in this room!—Lord, I am just where I would be, I would not change my situation for the world. I am just in heaven.' These were the expressions he continually used. I spoke to him about being tempted. 'Tempted!' he exclaimed, 'Oh! but we are safe. The devil may knock at the door and temptation may peep in at the window, but neither can hurt us, FOR GOD IS IN US.' Oh William, how I long for more of this man's spirit!"

A friend says, "When present in any party, my friend Bramwell always endeavoured to give the conversation a religious turn. He generally asked the spiritual state of all present, gave them suitable advice, requested them to pray, and prayed several times himself. Many have in this way been brought to a knowledge of the truth. He was once invited to Mr Coulson's, of Hazlewood, in the York circuit, to meet Mr George Smith. He had not been long in the house, before he enquired for Mrs Coulson. Mr C. told him she was then engaged, but would soon be with them. When she entered the room, Mr Bramwell said to her, 'Mrs. Coulson, salvation is come to your house; you are this day to be saved.' Though she had not previously felt any strong religious impressions, and appeared then to be under no particular concern for the salvation of her soul, yet Mr. B. and the rest knelt down and united in fervent prayer to God for her. After some time Mr. B. asked her, if she felt her need of salvation; she answered, 'No.' They continued to wrestle with God in her behalf for some time longer: at length she became deeply affected, and feeling herself to be a sinner, she earnestly joined with them in supplications to God, who was graciously pleased to pardon her sins and make her happy in his love before they arose from their knees. She ever after walked in the light of God's countenance, filled every station of life, as a wife, a mother, and a mistress, with credit to herself and satisfaction to others, and continued a member of the

Methodist society during the nine remaining years of her life. She was upright, steady, and useful; and then left the world in the full triumph of faith.

"He often told the class-leaders, that they ought to follow their members with the feelings of an affectionate mother, who to snatch a drowning child from a watery grave, jumped into a deep well, and at the most imminent risk, saved its life; yea, that they should thus pursue them even to death, plucking them as brands out of the fire."

When any of the members of the society were plunged into poverty and distress, Mr. Bramwell's bowels literally yearned over them; and in order as far as possible to lessen the burthen of the societies where he labored, he would sometimes request Mrs. Bramwell to be extremely careful and economical in her domestic management. He would say, "Ellen, remember that these things are paid for by the pence of the poor as well as by the pounds of the rich." In Salford circuit, to lighten the load under which the Society was groaning, he refused to have any fire in his own study. When at any time he felt the infirmities of human nature coming upon him, he was accustomed to intimate that he could not bear the idea of remaining on the list of travelling preachers, if unable to fulfil all the duties of that station."

The following extract of a letter from Mr. John Hebblewhite, of Cottingham, near Hull, shews the man of piety retiring from the busy scenes of men, that he might enjoy uninterrupted communion with his God: "During the time he was in the Hull circuit I lived in a house on the Humber Bank, nearly a mile out of the town. A large parlor on the first story commands an extensive and fine view of the river Humber; no vessels, going to or returning from sea, could pass without being seen from the windows. This room was his favorite place of retirement, and to which he knew he was at all times welcome;—for we felt ourselves honored by the use to which he appropriated it. He was wont to resort to it frequently, and spend two, three, four, five, and sometimes six hours on a visit, in prayer and reflection. He has often gone into the room at nine o'clock in the morning, and not left it till three in the afternoon. The days on which his longest visits occurred, were, I conjecture, his appointed fasts. On these occasions he refused any kind of refreshment, and used to say to us when he came in, 'Now take no notice of me.'"

The following anecdotes are communicated by Mr. Joshua Crowther, an aged and zealous class-leader in Leeds.

"While Mr. Bramwell was stationed in the Leeds circuit, he frequently called at my house. At an early period of our acquaintance he asked me if I had any thing to eat; to which I replied, 'Yes.' He then said, *If you were sold up, could you pay every one his own?* To which I replied, 'Yes.' His next remark was, *Then you can spare time to go with*

me. One cold winter's evening, I accompanied him to the Foundry, where he had to preach. Whilst he was engaged in the service, some of the family were providing a supper in an adjoining room. Perceiving that they were busy, he called out once or twice during the sermon, *Come out, and leave what you are now doing.* After preaching there was a fellowship-meeting, at the conclusion of which he went into the parlor, where a hot supper was prepared for him; but, to the regret of the family, he refused to eat any thing. He prayed with them and then returned home. After we had left the house, I said to him, 'I am afraid you will injure yourself by eating no supper.' He answered, *Had I eaten my supper to-night, I could have preached no more.* I accompanied him to the same place a few weeks afterwards; and it appeared that his silent reproof had been attended with profit; for at that time all the family attended the service of God; after which, he partook, in a very friendly manner, of a cold supper which had been prepared.

"During Mr. Bramwell's residence in Leeds the town was visited by a most malignant fever, which removed many valuable members of our society, as well as numbers from other denominations. I visited a person who was in a fever, caught the infection, and was soon very ill. During my illness, Mr. Bramwell visited me, and prayed very earnestly for my restoration. In the course of his agonizing prayer, he repeated, thirty or forty times, 'Lord save his body.' After prayer, I said to him, You are not willing to let me go, Sir.' To which he replied, God has not done with you yet. Shortly afterwards, being somewhat recovered, I went to a prayer meeting held in the vestry of the Old chapel, when Mr. B. was present. I attempted to pray; but he cried out, 'Stop, Jossy, stop! you are not yet strong enough to exercise in public.' Some time afterwards, Mr. Bramwell was attacked with the same fever. I went to see him and found him, in bed. After a little conversation together, he told me to pray. When I had complied with his request, he himself prayed very earnestly, and then said to me, 'Pray again.' Both of us prayed again and again, several times. He then exclaimed, in a solemn manner and with great force, 'Are we not sensible that this room is filled with God, angels, and glory?' The Lord had rebuked the complaint; 'The ferver owned his touch and fled,' and this man of God recommenced his ministerial labours about a week afterwards."

Mr. John Nelson has furnished the subjoined anecdotes and observations concerning his dear and faithful friend: —

"He rose early and generally spent a considerable portion of time in fervent prayer and in reading the holy Scriptures. He used to say, 'I like to have my soul filled with God in the morning, and then I am in the Spirit all the day.'

"In advocating the cause of the poor he had great influence over the minds of hearers. In a season of great distress, when many of the

poor were half naked, he preached a sermon on the subject, and procured for them a great many old clothes, as well as money, and assisted to distribute them among the most needy objects. He would sometimes live on the coarsest food and eat but seldom, that he might have more to bestow on those that were needy; and the tears of the poor, shed at at his interment, sufficiently indicate that they had lost a friend and a benefactor.

"He felt the force of that Scripture, 'Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him;' and conscious that in doing this he discharged one branch of Christian duty, he gloried in being reproached for the truth's sake and often added, 'All this is working together for good.' Whatever censures were cast upon him, I never heard him attempt to justify himself, — except once, in a case of necessity. His brethren often thought him to blame in this particular, but he continued to the close of life to pursue the same line of conduct.

"Many persons consulted him in person, and others by letter, on the most intricate and important subjects; and on these occasions the greatest secrecy was observed, for he would not suffer even the wife of his bosom to open any letters. Marriage was a subject on which many applied to him for advice; and in this his discernment was peculiar. As he invariably adhered to the apostolic injunction, that believers should marry only in the Lord, it will not be thought wonderful if those connections which he encouraged, generally terminated in a happy union; while those which he strongly opposed, have generally produced disappointment and sorrow. — He was remarkable for restoring peace in families; one instance of which occured near Dewsbury, in Yorkshire. A certain woman of a very respectable family had not the liberty of worshipping God according to her own views; after having suffered much from her husband, she left him. For some time they remained in a state of separation from each other; but Mr. Bramwell, by his judicous advice, was, under God, made an instrument of promoting their re-union. She returned back to her husband; they lived in matrimonial harmony together for several years; and her end was peaceful and happy.

"A short time prior to his death, he called on a friend in Halifax, as he had to pass through that town in travelling between Manchester and Leeds. In the course of conversation, his friend observed, Mr. Bramwell, we shall be glad if you will come and travel with us the next year.' My dear brother, replied he, before next year, you or I will be in eternity. And so it happened. As they went together to take the coach, his friend said, 'Mr B. you have but a shabby hat to wear, I will buy you a new one.' Mr. Bramwell said, My brother, this hat will serve me as long as I shall need one."

When Mr. Bramwell was in the Leeds circuit, according to plan, he

went once in six weeks, to the house of Mr. Stoner of Berwick-in-Elmet, where he always slept. On one of these occasions he had spent nearly the whole of the day in fasting and prayer. On the following morning he rose early, and for several hours appeared to be engaged in agonizing prayer. Mrs. Stoner had gone out for a little while, and left in the house a pious woman, who was occasionally employed by her. After some time Mr. B. opened the parlor-door, called Sally into the room, and said nothing to her, but fell upon his knees. She also knelt down. They both remained for some time in profound silence; during which period, she felt the Divine influence in such an extraordinary manner run through every power of soul and body, that it seemed to her as if the room was completely filled with the glory of God. For some moments nature was nearly overcome, and she was ready to sink into the vision of God! Mr. Bramwell then prayed and gave thanks to the Lord for such a glorious manifestation. He related the circumstances to Mrs. Stoner, on her return, as well as to several other christian friends, to all of whom the mention of it was rendered a peculiar blessing. And for many years afterwards, when he happened to see Mr. or Mrs. Stoner he would very pertinently say, "Does the glory still remain in your parlour?"

"It was impossible," says Mr. Everett, "to be in Mr. Bramwell's company without profiting. I never left him without a determination to live nearer to God; and was never with him without being ashamed of my own religious littleness.

"I never met with a man in our connection who had such deep and accurate knowledge of human nature, and the operations of the Spirit of God. In these he was wise above his fellows."

Mr. Benjamin Wilkinson, of Sheffield, says, "I visited Salford, the January before Mr. Bramwell's death; and amongst other things, he said in very positive language, I know this is the last circuit I shall ever take; but do not tell this to any body. This surprised me much, and I replied, 'You are very well, and likely to live many years yet:' To which he again, in the same positive language, said,—I know this is, &c., and then added, I believe I shall die of an apoplectic fit. I asked him if he did not feel alarmed. No he said, I desire it; to me it would be a pleasure."

Mr. Bramwell once observed to a friend, who was conversing with him concerning preaching, that when a minister ascends the pulpit, he should be like fire among dry stubble; that however cold and lifeless his congregation might be, they should be roused and animated by his fervent appeals. He thought the words of ministers should be indeed words of fire. It was his decided opinion, that ministers without unction or Divine power, are not properly qualified to preach the gospel; and that such persons ought to abandon the sacred office and preach

no more, until they have recovered their spiritual strength, and are again baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

He had also similar views concerning class-leaders. Although they might be strictly moral and upright in their conduct, yet if they had lost the real life and power of religion, he thought they were disqualified for their office; and he frequently lamented that there was no law in Methodism by which such preachers and leaders could be removed.

In a circuit where Mr. Bramwell once laboured, several local preachers had said, that "their talents were not to awaken and arouse careless and impenitent sinners, but to build up believers in the faith. "Mr. Bramwell, having heard of this, preached a sermon on the subject, in which he endeavoured to prove, that such reasoning was too frequently used as an apology for the loss of the real life and power of God. He remarked, that although some preachers might have a peculiar talent for comforting and edifying believers, yet that Christs true servants, those whom he sent into his vineyard, could do all sorts of work. They could plough, dig, plant, sow, water, &c., and he earnestly entreated the preachers not to be satisfied without seeing the fruits of their labours, in the awakening and conversion of sinners.

Under all the changing scenes of life, respecting himself, his family, or friends, (some of which were peculiarly embarrassing,) his first enquiry was, "What is the will of God? Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" If this did not appear clear to him, he would engage in fasting and earnest prayer; and never gave up the point until he had received some clear intimations from the Lord. When he was thus satisfied of the will of God, he instantly bowed to the conviction of the Spirit; and whatever might be the vent, he never seemed to murmur or repine. Whilst on one hand he never wished to run before providence, on the other he was equally careful not to tarry behind. Even in things which many persons would consider trifling and insignificant, he adopted the same plan; and if any friends called upon him to ask his opinion respecting their worldly business or spiritual concerns, he very generally retired to his closet, and as a suppliant before the throne of grace, asked counsel of God. If at any time it were inconvenient to retire into private, he would instantly kneel down and pray with the persons in the parlor.

It will not be matter of surprise, that a minister who lived in such a spirit, should have been highly esteemed; and that the sudden removal of so bright a star from the firmament of the Church militant, should have caused Mr. George Marsden to exclaim, whilst taking a last look of Mr. Bramwell's remains, previous to their removal from Leeds, "*Well! —we have lost one of our brightest ornaments!*"

CHAPTER XXI.

Further particulars of Revivals in several Circuits.—Extracts from Miss Rhodes's Journal.

The following short but satisfactory account of the commencement of a Revival in Rotherham and Sheffield, may be regarded as a supplement to the account of Mr. Bramwell's visit to Kirkstall Forge recorded in the 89th page of the first volume. (Second Edition.)

"Mr. Wm. Stephens, an itinerant preacher, then stationed at Rotherham, rode after Mr. Bramwell and Mr. Nelson to Kirkstall Forge.—Mr. B. was preaching, Mr. S. sat on horseback at the skirts of the congregation; and when they adjourned, he accompanied them into the chapel. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out abundantly, and many cried aloud for mercy. For some time Mr. Stephens remained a silent spectator, when Mr. Nelson requested him to join them in prayer, which he did, and was abundantly blessed in his own soul. On his return to Rotherham, he related what he had seen and felt at the Forge, which was rendered a great blessing to many of the Society. At the following love-feast in Rotherham, there was a remarkable out-pouring of the Spirit. Many of the friends had gone from Sheffield, who felt the heavenly influence; and in the love-feast at Sheffield, the Sunday following, R. Marbles, a local preacher, after having related his experience, cried out with peculiar energy, 'Rotherham's God is here!' Almost the whole congregation seemed powerfully affected. Many were in great distress, and cried out, God be merciful to me a sinner! Lord save or I perish!' They continued in prayer for several hours.

The rumor of this extraordinary meeting was soon circulated through the town, and the constables were dispatched at ten o'clock in the evening, by some persons who had no knowledge of Divine things, or of the effects produced by the Spirit of God, when through it a man is convinced of his native sinfulness and the magnitude of his transgressions. These persons had witnessed some of the apparent confusion, and the anguish of mind, manifested by penitents under conviction, and had in their alarm falsely attributed them to nearly the same cause, as did those who were in doubt concerning a similar occurrence in the days of the Apostle. (Acts ii. 13.) But when the constables entered the chapel, and beheld many men in great distress, and others earnestly interceding with heaven in their behalf, they judged it most prudent to retire and leave them in the undisturbed exercise of that duty which some of them were too conscious they had themselves most awfully neglected."

As frequent mention has been made, in Mr. Bramwell's correspondence, to Miss Rhodes, and her labors in various places, it is presumed that a few extracts from the edifying journal of that pious lady (late Mrs. Marsden,) will appear interesting to those who knew Mr. Bramwell, and many of the excellent of the earth with whom it was his felicity to associate. All the extracts refer to some particular periods, when Miss R. has been mentioned, in a previous part of the Memoir, as being at the time an inmate in Mr. B.'s house. The reader will thus have an opportunity of knowing from an eye witness, how that holy man and his devout wife conducted themselves in their family, and what high and sacred converse they held about "the best things" with all those who enjoyed the privilege of dwelling under their roof.

"February 11, 1795. — This day Mr. Bramwell preached a funeral sermon for Nanny Cutler, at Kirkstall Forge, from 1 Corinthians, i. 27, 28, 29. 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world,' &c. in which he particularly showed how the wisdom of God is manifested, in choosing 'the things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are, that no flesh might glory in his presence.' He pointed out the beautiful simplicity of the gospel of Christ, and the danger which exists of the wise and learned mixing philosophy with the pure gospel; and then mentioned many 'things which are, that must be brought to nought.'— By it, the proud man must be made humble, the self-righteous must be made sensible that he is a sinner, the wise man must be convinced that his wisdom is foolishness with God, &c. Thus, 'the things that are, are brought to nought,' that the power of the gospel may take effect, and the wisdom of God may be made manifest in 'saving sinners by the foolishness of preaching.' He said, that Nanny Cutler was a praying soul from her first setting out; that she used to make a point of rising in the night to pray, and sometimes she prayed all night for souls, and perhaps twenty times in the day upon her knees; and that she went to her neighbors from house to house, to warn them to turn to God; she also used to wrestle for them in private for many hours together. Mr. B. said, though she was much persecuted in many places, he never saw her discover the least discontent, or heard her even speak of any one's unkindness to her, except in three instances. She made a point of taking all to the Lord, and has been heard to lay the case of particular persons before him, and pray much for them; in short, he said, he believed she had lived nine years in the will of God, trusting in his Providential care; and he had often heard her say *the Lord never failed her.* Thus she went on, giving all the glory to God till she finished her course with joy.

"May 2.—I have had the privilege of spending a week at Mr. Bramwell's, Birstal, and have found it a blessed time, and a happy means of removing all my discouragements; the Lord favored me with a fresh

manifestation of his love, and filled my heart with joy and peace through believing.

"Sister Beecroft, who accompanied me, found it a time of temptation for a few of the first days; the Lord made such a discovery to her of the evils of her heart, as caused her to cry unto him for deliverance. On the Thursday, Mr. Bramwell, Mr. Drake, Mrs. Bramwell, &c., wrestled in prayer for her two or three hours, when the heavens seemed to be opened, and power was given to plead with God, and faith to believe in Him for present blessings. After having been upon our knees nearly three hours, first one and then another pleading for her, the Lord answered for himself, bruised Satan beneath her feet, and delivered her soul. I never was present before at such a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord: it seemed as if we were permitted to get into the light of faith, and it was like pleading face to face with our Heavenly Father.

"Sept. 2. — Received a letter from Mr. Bramwell with an invitation to spend some time at Sheffield; I consider it as from the Lord, a word of direction suggesting to me the place whither I ought to move.

"Sept. 17. — Reached Sheffield this day, and felt thankful to God for the great privilege of being permitted to reside for a season, under Mr. and Mrs. Bramwell's roof, whose piety and example do me good. I believe the Lord will make my stay here a blessing to me. Mr. Bramwell came home this evening; I was humbled and quickened under his prayer.

"Monday.—The conversation at breakfast was made profitable to me Mr. B. observed, the more he got of God, the more need he felt of watching unto prayer in order to keep it and to get more; and that many lost the witness of sanctification, by sinking into stillness.—This, I felt, had been my case many times. Lord, help me to press forward, and to labour more than ever for 'the meat that endureth unto eternal life!' I feel a conviction of the need of beginning afresh.

"Thursday. — Mr. Bramwell came home from his travels in the circuit. I found it a gracious season in the afternoon, whilst he was at prayer. He repeated these words, 'Thou hast been our Father and our God!' My heart replied, 'My Father, my Father, and my God!' and was penetrated under a sense of God's love and great condescension. Under preaching I felt it a searching time (from Phil. iii. 12, 13,) 'not as though I had already attained,' &c. At the public band the Lord was very present; one or two found liberty.

"Oct. 2. Friday—Was a day of general thanksgiving for peace and unity in our connexion. The morning prayer-meeting was a gracious softning time; at noon also, God was very present; but, in the evening, he came down in great power. There were nearly a thousand people, throughout the whole of whom a general movement was visible: many cried, yea groaned aloud for mercy, and God delivered them. The select

band could not be regularly met, so many souls were affected on every side. The Lord drew near. My soul could truly say,

> 'Lo God is here, let us adore,
> And own how dreadful is this place.'

About the middle of the time it seemed to me as if the heavens were opened, and God present in such a powerful manner, that every soul might be filled.

"Oct. 3.—Mr. Bramwell observed, he often felt an uncommon weight upon his mind before preaching; and his sermon was sometimes taken from him, so that, without the immediate help of God, he could not preach at all. In general, at such seasons, after beginning his discourse, he has found great assistance, his spirit has been led into God, and heaven opened to his view. This, he says, the Lord does wisely, to take us from depending upon ourselves; for we must not depend upon the frame of our minds, whether happy or unhappy, but upon the Lord alone.

"October 4. SUNDAY.—At eight o'clock, Mr. Bramwell preached a most weighty discourse from Isaiah lii. 1. 2. '*Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion!*' &c. &c. Many felt the power of God. At Garden Street chapel, he preached from Num. xiv. 8, 9. '*If the Lord delight in us then will he bring us into this land,*' &c. The word was with power, and many rocky hearts were broken. Near the close, he was like a flame of fire; the people burst into tears on every side, and could say, 'Lo, God is here' of a truth!'

"Oct. 5. MONDAY.—Being quarter-day, the love-feast began about two o'clock. After Mr. Bramwell and some others had prayed, a solemn sense of God's presence was felt. Many were deeply convicted and cried out for mercy, and (glory be to God!) several found peace. I felt my spirit drawn into God, with such a view of his fulness that I could gladly have died and gone to Jesus. The watchnight was also a profitable season; some found the Lord.

"Oct. 11. SUNDAY.—Mr. B. preached from '*Jesus wept*' over the grave of Lazarus. It was a most blessed time. In the evening, good was done. Mr. Bramwell was constrained to conclude, from the cries of one in distress.

"Oct. 18. SUNDAY.—I have had a profitable week, and some good times in prayer. The Lord is ever present with me. In one of Mr. B's sermons he observed that 'Pride is always seeking independency, whilst humility seeks communion with God.'

"Nov. 17. TUESDAY.—Set out with Mr. and Mrs. Bramwell to go round the circuit. We came first to a village called Hathersage, where Mr. B. preached from I Pet. i. 3. '*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*'

We had a good time; many came to hear, and several found liberty in the morning meeting.

"Nov. 18.—We came to Grindleford bridge, and but few came to hear. I was greatly refreshed while Mr. B. spoke from Psalm cxxxvii. 5. '*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her cunning*,' &c. Great liberty was granted in prayer and my soul was much blessed. That Scripture was applied with power, Jer. xvii. 7, 8. '*Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters*,' &c. My confidence in God was much strengthened.

"Nov. 19.— We came to Baslow. Mr. Bramwell preached in the New chapel, from Rom. viii. 35. 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' Much power was felt; and, in the society-meeting in the room, several found peace, particularly one who had had a remarkable dream. The prayer meeting in the morning, at six o'clock, was a most blessed time; one soul got quite through the strait gate. A few met for prayer in a house, at nine o'clock: one or two were set at liberty, and some awakened. When the Lord works, it is with rapidity; powerful effects are then seen in a little time.

"Nov. 20.—We reached Middleton. Mr. Bramwell spoke from Revelations, xxi. 7, 8. 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things.' Many felt the word, and several got liberty. An old woman, above seventy years of age, was struck in a moment. She fell to the ground, making a frightful noise, and continued speechless and in an agony for above an hour. When she came to herself, she jumped off the chair on which she had been placed, clapped her hands and praised the Lord.

"Nov. 21.—We came to Eyam, and went to a village called Foolow, where Mr. B. spoke from John vii, 37, 38. 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me,' &c. Whilst he was speaking, the power of God came down, and there was a general cry for mercy. Three persons, if not more, found peace; and a backslider was healed. This day my soul has been much blessed.

"Nov. 22. Sunday.—At Eyam in the morning the power of God came upon the people under the first prayer, so that Mr. B. did not attempt to preach. Several were in deep distress; prayer was continued till all in the place seemed to feel it. How many were set at liberty, I cannot tell. The Lord wrought wonders, glory be to his holy name forever and ever!—At noon Mr. B. preached a powerful discourse, and the people heard with fixed attention. It being very rainy, we were prevented from going with Mr. B. this evening to another village, where there was a great work. Mrs. B. and I remained at Eyam. We visited a woman who for some years had been blind, but had lately received her sight through a dream in answer to prayer. The principal thing in her dream was, that she thought she saw our Lord come to her with two

olive leaves in his hand, which he placed upon her eyes, and in her sleep she thought her sight was restored to her. Accordingly in the morning when she awoke, she could clearly see the green fields, and the prospect before the house, her children, and other endearing objects, to her great astonishment and satisfaction. Her soul was this day made happy in God.*

"Nov. 23. MONDAY. — We reached a village called Bomfard, where they say, there are only three families in which there are not some of the members converted to God. The room was so full, that it was with difficulty we could move. Between forty and fifty remained at the outside. Numbers were awakened; and, we suppose, a dozen, if not more, either found peace or were cleansed from remains of sin. The meeting was concluded again and again, but the people would not go home. They seemed determined to wrestle on, so that it did not conclude till eleven o'clock.

Nov. 24. TUESDAY. — Came to a place called Doe. Here again Mr. Bramwell could not preach, the people fell into convictions. So the time was spent in prayer: several got liberty, and some were purified.

"Dec. 13. — Mr. Bramwell preached at Garden-Street chapel, Sheffield, in the forenoon, from Matt. xviii. 10, and in the evening, from Acts ii. 17, 18, 19, 20. The latter was a most extraordinary time, particularly under prayer in the society, when there was a general movement; many were pricked to the heart and some found peace.

"Jan. 4, 1796. — On the last day in the old year a love-feast was held; the Lord came down in great power; it is supposed, above fifty obtained liberty: and at the watch-night in the evening, it is thought, thirty or more found the Lord.

"On the new year's day, at Rotherham, the Lord poured out his Spirit, and several found liberty. It was the same, last night, at the renewing of the covenant. Such a time I never remember to have seen: nearly three thousand people were solemnly entering into a covenant-engagement with God, when such a power descended as filled the place with the glory of the Lord. It seemed to me as if the heavenly Host were there, and every soul was filled with God. I could not help shouting the praises of the Lord, my soul was so filled with his love. The number that were particularly blessed, is not known. Some fine young ladies were brought in. In short, all ranks of people mixed in the great congregation. Truly the times of refreshing are come from the presence of the Lord, and the people are made willing in this the day of Christ's power. Not a hand is lifted up. Persecution sleeps and God is getting himself the victory over many hearts. Glory be to his name!

"June 4.—This day I went with Mr. Bramwell and Mr. Wilkinson

* This was most probably the same case as that mentioned page 4 in this volume.

to Derby. We called at two villages in the way, where Mr. B. preached. At several places many souls found the Lord.

"July 3. Sunday.—This has been a blessed day. Whilst Mr. Bramwell was preaching from Heb. xii. 28. 'Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved,' &c., my soul was much blessed while he shewed the nature of that kingdom, which could not be moved, viz. The kingdom of grace in the soul. An uncommon degree of power attended the word. The whole congregation seemed moved; for my part, I was nearly breaking out in prayer. At the close of the sermon, I was so seized with the power of God that I trembled from head to foot, and with some difficulty held my peace. This morning Mr. B. spake from Thess. v. 23. 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly,' &c. It was a most instructive time: he showed us how the senses, the passions and the rational powers were to be sanctified to God, that 'every thought might be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.' Many felt the power of the word.

"March 10, 1799.—Mr. Bramwell preached this morning from Heb. v. 12, 13, 14. 'For, when, for the time, ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again,' &c. He first shewed what is implied by being teachers, viz. Not only those who are instructors, but introducers,—those who go before to introduce others into the path, and should therefore be well acquainted with it, not only by information but by experience. For when for the time,'—some perhaps ten years, some twenty. 'And yet have need of milk,'—are yet incapable of receiving strong meat. 'For every one that useth milk, is unskilful in the word of righteousness,'—for he is a babe. 'But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, &c.—who by using their senses, can discern both good and evil. Few only can bear strong meat; but to those whose capacities are open to receive it, it is the joy of ministers to communicate it: and the glory of the gospel is, to make known the hidden mysteries,—'to speak wisdom among them that are perfect,' &c. With all the privileges we enjoy, with all the baptisms we have received, yet, how little we know of the deep things of God, how contracted our capacities, how shallow our views! We may well be ashamed, and hide our faces in the dust, at our littleness of faith, love, and every other grace of the Spirit. Why, in the midst of all these privileges, are we not 'lost in wonder, love, and praise,' entirely swallowed up in God, sunk into the Deity, 'and lost in the boundless abyss' of his love? I felt a power in the Spirit to look through the word to God, and found it made spirit and life to my soul. I received it all to myself, being conscious that I deserved all the reproof. I am yet but a babe; I want a greater capacity to receive strong meat: I desire it, my soul pants after it!

"March 11.—The conversation this morning, at breakfast, was very

profitable. Mr. B. said, that Fleming observes, 'wherever there is an increase of light in the Church, there is always less religion,' because it is not light acknowledged that brings salvation, but it is the will submitting to God's influence under that increase of light and knowledge, which brings the souls to God; therefore, it is the will that is the great inlet to grace. 'For if any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.—Behold, I have set before you life and death, choose ye.'

"March 18.— Yesterday Mr. Bramwell preached from James i. 6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering,' &c. He chiefly dwelt upon the different states of the people as hearers of the gospel. Some, he said, had received conviction, had been penitent, but had quenched the Spirit, and were not so now; these must again be awakened to see their danger, before they could properly be said to be subjects for pardon. Many had once received justification and enjoyed it, but had now fallen from it; these often complain that they want sanctification, when, in reality did they know their state, they want justifying afresh; and, until they are convinced of this, they will neither get justified nor sanctified. There is a need of confession, humiliation and a coming again to Christ, before the soul can be healed, and raised out of any of those states into a better.

"April 24.—Mr. Bramwell preached from 1 Thess. iv. 4. Many felt the word; yea, there was a general movement through the whole congregation. Mr. Smith, Mr. Nelson, and some others prayed afterwards. Great liberty was felt from the Lord. One soul cried out in distress for a clean heart, but did not obtain a clear witness. Many were much blessed and seemed filled with love and praise.

"April 25.—Mrs. Fletcher having invited Mr. and Mrs Bramwell to pay her a visit, I accompanied them, and we reached Madeley this evening at eight o'clock.

"April 26.—Mr Bramwell preached this evening (being Friday) to a large congregation, in what is called Mrs. Fletcher's Room, a large barn in her yard, which she fitted up some years ago, to have preaching in it.—Mr. Bramwell spoke from Heb. xii. part of the 2, 3. 'Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, &c. He particularly dwelt upon the nature of that joy that was set before Christ, viz. our joy, our happiness, he had in view. He being God, was completely happy in himself, without us; but it was the joy of bringing us to himself that was set before him, and that made him 'endure the cross and despise the shame' for our sakes. He also particularly and in a very affecting manner, enforced the necessity of considering our need of him, till all the people seemed to feel the word; many were deeply affected, and the Lord was very present.

"April 27. SATURDAY.—Mr Bramwell preached from Heb. vi. 11, 12

Whilst he shewed the necessity of using '*the same diligence unto the end*,' many seemed to feel; but, before he had done, several were awakened to a sense of their need of purity of heart. When he prayed, a person next to me got into an agony for the blessing. After one or two had prayed, Mr B. concluded, and desired all who choose to stay a little longer, to come out of the gallery into the bottom of the chapel. They did so, and filled the place. Then Mr. Bramwell, Mr. Samuel Taylor, (a travelling preacher,) Mrs. Bramwell, I, and some others, engaged in prayer. Truly, the power of the Lord was present to heal; some were pardoned, others healed of their backslidings, and several were brought into full liberty. It seemed indeed a time for asking and receiving. I felt much faith for souls, and such a love to them, that I could have remained till midnight, praying with and for them. We were obliged to leave about ten o'clock, though many continued and went away in distress.

"April 28. SUNDAY.—Mr. Bramwell preached in the Room to a very large and attentive congregation from 1 Thess. ii. 3, 4. 'For our exhortation was not of deceit,' &c. &c. He first dwelt largely upon the necessity of holiness and purity in those who preach the gospel; and that they who are put into such an important trust should be without guile, for they are executors to the people. God hath put them in trust with the gospel of Christ,—with repentance, pardon, sanctification, and holiness in all its branches. These they are to offer to the people as purchased for them by Jesus Christ, to invite them to come for their portion, and to receive it now. Great faithfulness is necessary in freely delivering them their portion,—not to cheat them out of it by saying, 'It is only for a few,' or, 'Full salvation is not now, not till death.' Many are deceived by these and similar delays; and it is another way among many others, of cheating souls, out of their portion, not to preach and present salvation, by faith now. He earnestly invited all to come without delay for their portion. Many felt and received the sweet invitation. A great power accompanied the word; I felt as if I could have pleaded for the people till they had all got their portion from the Lord.

"In Colebrook Dale, Mr. Bramwell preached from Rev. xii 10,11. 'Now is come salvation and strength,' &c. The people heard with fixed attention, while many felt the kingdom of God to come to their hearts some found liberty, and many were much blessed. We spent a little time in prayer afterwards, and found the Lord very present to save and bless.

"April 29.—Mr. Bramwell preached at Mrs. Fletcher's from James i. 6, 7. 'But let him ask in faith nothing wavering,' &c. This also was a time of great power. The people seemed to drink in the word, like the thirsty land the showers that descend upon it. A little time was spent

afterwards in prayer. Mrs. Fletcher and some others prayed; many were deeply affected, and seemed to go away reluctantly, as Mr. B. concluded very soon. Some got good. Mr. B. gave out for a prayer meeting in the morning at six o'clock.

"April 30.—Many people were assembled in time, the Lord graciously poured upon us all the Spirit of prayer. Great liberty was given to plead for souls. Several were in distress; and, I believe more than one obtained liberty.

"May 4.— Mr. Bramwell preached from 1 Pet. v. 5, 6. 'Behold with humility: for God resisteth the proud,' &c. He first shewed clearly what was not humility, viz. speaking meanly of ourselves, for there might be the depth of pride hid under it all; ceasing to act in order that others might do our work, taking the lowest place in company, appearing abstracted from outward things,—all these might be done from a desire that others should think us humble, and yet not be the effects of real humility. He said, some philosophers have observed, that the wood of the fig-tree, if thrown into a pond, will sink to the bottom, and stay there till it is well soaked, then it will rise to the top: Just so, the soul that is truly humble, will abide at the botom, till it is well soaked by repentance, conviction, self-knowledge, &c., till it is fit to be exalted in due time, into the nature, the image, and all the fulness of God. In short, he said, real humility consists not in saying 'We are nothing,' but in *feeling* that we are nothing, and in Christ being '*all and in all*' to us. I felt every word come with power and conviction to my mind. I thought, while he was speaking, 'Why is not Christ a thousand times more precious to me? He is the foundation of all my hope.'

"May 13.—I went to hear Mr. Bramwell preach at Croppel. He spoke from Heb. xiii. 12. Whilst he described Christ, suffering without the gate, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, many heard with great attention, and the effect was powerful, especially towards the close. After some prayer, we came back to Ratcliffe, to a love-feast, which was crowned in a peculiar degree with the Divine presence. Several of the people wrestled in prayer with God till they got liberty. Some were cleansed. I found it a peculiarly gracious season to my soul.

"Oct. 29, 1800,—Mr. B. preached at Leek, from Heb. vi 18, 19. 'That by two immutable things,' &c: I found great encouragement. I felt my anchor was entered within the vail. My soul rejoiced in God my Saviour. Many of the people seemed blessed, and one or two found liberty. At six o'clock in the morning we had a most blessed time. Mr. B. said something upon the work of sanctification:—Four things must be attended to.

"1. Conviction of the want of it.

"2. Diligence in seeking it.

"3. To seek it by faith and not by works.

"4. To continue believing, and obeying the dictates of the Spirit, in order to stand in it.

"Nov. 5.—I accompanied Mrs. A. and Mr. B. to Syson, in Leicestershire, where Mr. B. preached in Mr. Cooper's new chapel from Isaiah, 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions,' &c. He said, that *forgiving*, with God, was forgetting,—the Lord *will not remember our sins*; like a person taking a pen, and blotting out of his book all the debt he had against a man, and thus freely clearing his debtor from all that stood against him. The people seemed to feel the word; during prayer many were comforted.

"Nov. 6.—Early this morning Mr. Bramwell spoke from, 'If ye from your hearts forgive not men their trespasses, neither shall your heavenly Father forgive yours,' &c He urged the necessity of strict attention to this rule. He said, if a vessel had one leaky place, it would endanger the whole vessel; so if one sin was yielded to it would eventually prevent the soul's salvation. It was a time of great power; several were comforted, and one found liberty. We came back to Loughborough, where a large congregation waited. Mr. Bramwell preached from Isaiah xxxv. 3. 'Strengthen ye the weak hands,' &c. Many were greatly strengthened and blessed. One, if not more, was brought into blessed liberty. The woman praised the Lord in a wonderful manner.

"Sept. 6, 1801. SUNDAY.—This day Mr. Bramwell began his public ministry in Leeds, from the 2 Cor. xiii. 7, 8, 9. '*Now I pray to God that ye do no evil*, &c. It was a blessed time, the Lord was with him of a truth.

"Sept. 9.—Mr. B. preached from Luke xxii. 42, 43, 44. '*Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me*,' &c. He labored to prove that no trial, no affliction whatever, need hinder us in our spiritual warfare; that if we do but pray always, every thing will help us forward; the more worldly business we have, the more we should increase in prayer, or our souls cannot prosper."

The following is a communication from Mrs. Z. Taft:—"In May, 1817, Mr. Bramwell held a love-feast at the chapel at West-moor Colliery, when, after a few had spoken their Christian experience, he said, I am just thinking, there are some penitents here: and, after having united in singing a verse for their encouragement, he commanded all who were determined to forsake their sins and come to Christ, to stand up and show themselves. Instantly there were fifteen or sixteen persons on their feet, all in tears. The first who rose, was a stout young man, who trembled exceedingly whilst he cried out, 'O! do pray for me!' Shortly afterwards, Mr. B. requested all to kneel down; and it seemed that every individual was engaged in earnest mental prayer. In a few minutes the young man rose up clearly at liberty, and appa-

rently quite filled with the love of God. We prayed again and several more were made happy. Mr. B. then desired the people to sit down, and to continue to speak. We did so. In a little time, he again requested the remaining penitents to stand up; and this he repeated, till there were none left in a state of unbelief. Praises to God and the Lamb were heard from every voice, and something super-human appeared in every countenance. Truly it was good to be there.

"About six weeks afterwards, a love-feast was held at Cawe-hill, three miles from the same place, and in the same circuit. I accompanied several of our friends, as many as filled six boats, and sailed up the river Tyne, from Shields, to Cawe-hill, which is about a mile from the river and five from Shields. Being such a large company, we sung hymns in the boats as we proceeded, which seemed to be responded by multitudes of serious people who were travelling over the fields on each side of the river, and proceeding to the same place. It was a high day, which many of us will never forget. On our arrival, many were disappointed at seeing another preacher in the pulpit; but they were happy afterwards to find that Mr. Bramwell was present. He opened the love-feast; and the first person that spoke was the young man who had been so gloriously delivered at the love-feast a few weeks before, to whom Mr. B. said, 'The Lord has kept you these few weeks; be faithful, go forward, and he will save you to the end!' After a few had spoken, Mr. B. requested all who were in distress to stand up, when about thirty instantly arose. After an exhortation had been given to them, prayer was made for the mourners, and several found peace with God. Mr. B. again and again requested those that remained in distress to stand up, till there were none left. The chapel was truly filled with the glory of God. Many who had been lately converted at Shields, (some of them captains of ships, others mates of vessels, and many sailors and their wives,) spoke with great freedom. Mr. Bramwell exclaimed with admiration, 'What! are we to have no other persons to speak than sailors and pitmen?' This was a day never to be forgotten. I was surprised at Mr. B. requesting me to pray so often; but little did I think it would be the last time we should have the felicity of praying together in this world."

Mr. Burdekin, of York, says, "In compliance with your request, I send a few particulars of the death of my late cousin, Mr. John Burdekin. He was the only surviving child of his parents, who placed him with the late Mr. Carr, Attorney at law, Gomersall. After he had served his clerkship, he spent some time in London, and returned at Birstal, his native place, where he settled, and commenced the practice of his profession. His abilities were highly promising; I have heard disinterested people say, that they were of the superior kind, which made his entrance into life very flattering. Yet, (alas!) he felt no real love for

Divine things, but was devoted to the world, to his business and amusements. In the year 1794, when Mr. Bramwell was stationed at Birstal, it pleased the Almighty severely to afflict my cousin; and at that juncture Mr. Bramwell attended him at his own request, and was the instrument under God of his experiencing *a real change of heart.* The conversion of an Attorney was, at that time, a circumstance not very common amongst the Methodists; and, of course, the visible alteration in my cousin's heart and views was the subject of much conversation, and had a tendency to strengthen the prevailing conviction that the revival of the work of God, at Birstal, was the genuine work of the Spirit. My cousin did not long survive this great change. He died in the twenty-eighth year of his age; and as Mr. Bramwell had been instrumental in his conversion, he was desired to write an epitaph to be inscribed upon his tomb-stone, in Birstal Church-yard. Mr Bramwell complied with this request, and produced, as nearly as I can recollect, the following lines, which have been considered very appropriate, and prove that Mr. Bramwell had a natural talent for poetry.

"While grac'd by nature for the work in hand
With notion's clear, the law at his command,
The LAW OF GOD not seen by nature's eye
He ne'er beheld, till he was doomed to die;
Then, of his vileness and his wisdom tir'd,
Receiv'd the Gospel, and in Christ expir'd."

In the 92d page of the first volume of this memoir, the success of Mr. Bramwell's ministry in the Leeds circuit is briefly stated. Mr. James Blackett, at that time a zealous class-leader and local preacher, but now a travelling preacher, gives the following account of the progress of that work of God in the part of the town with which he was connected:

"At that time five classes met in High-street, Saint-Peter's, and the numbers of members added to them was very great. It appeared as if all the inhabitants of the place would soon be converted to God. Their minds were so much affected, that those who had been the most profligate ceased to persecute, and many of them began to pray; while others were filled with surprise at what God had wrought. On perceiving this, as I was then the leader of two classes in the street, I visited every house between the top and the bottom of the street on both sides, and spoke as faithfully as possible to each family respecting the salvation of their souls. I found many whom I little expected to be truly awakened to a sense of their danger through sin, and engaged in seeking the Lord in secret. Several of this description were desirous of meeting in class with the people of God, that they might enjoy the communion of saints; but they had not been previously invited. Joy evidently glistened in their eyes, when they heard that I was come to seek the wandering sheep, and to give them an opportunity of receiving religious instruc-

tion. Great numbers of them in those days forsook all their sins, and followed the Lord with purpose of heart."

Mr. Bailey, of Ferrybridge, has communicated the following particulars:—"On New year's day, 1798, I went from Shafton to Sheffield to a love-feast, which was held in Norfolk-street chapel. There, for the first time, I met with Mr. Bramwell and Mr. W. E. Miller, and had a particularly gratifying season at the love-feast; during which, a most extraordinary scene presented itself to my view. In the gallery several persons seemed completely overwhelmed with the goodness of God. Great numbers in the body of the chapel were in distress,—some occasionally singing praises to God for the manifested light of his countenance, others praying for deliverance. In the evening, Mr. Bramwell preached from 2 Cron. xv. 12, and following verses, 'And they entered,' &c. After which Mr. James Wood read the Covenant in a very solemn manner, the whole congregation then remained for some minutes in profound silence. Shortly afterwards, there was a most extraordinary effusion of the Spirit, like a rushing wind, which operated somewhat in the way of an electric shock upon many persons in the congregation; numbers of whom instantly fell down in the greatest agony of mind, and for a considerable time the whole congregation seemed overpowered by the Divine influence. Prayer was instantly made for those in distress, and numbers were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

"About the year 1800, I went to Nottingham, on a visit to Mr. Bramwell, when there was a love-feast held on the Sunday, which was a very powerful season. The following day, (Monday) was the quarter-day. Mr. John Drake, was with me at the Quarterly dinner. I was so much struck with the spirit and appearance of the persons present, that I almost involuntarily thought I lived in the Apostolic age. Provisions were then extremely dear, and many of the Society were in deep distress; yet such a spirit of christian love prevailed, that all things seemed common. Mr. Bramwell, as usual, improved the opportunity by singing, religious converse, and prayer. During the dinner, the whole of the company appeared deeply affected, and scarcely a dry cheek was to be seen in any part of the room. On hearing of the distress of the poor, those of the meeting who were in affluent circumstances, seemed to vie with each other in generosity. One offered to administer medicines gratis, others coals, money, clothing, &c., saying, 'Nothing that we have, will we call our own in this season of distress.' The same evening Mr. Bramwell urged my friend Drake to preach, who acceded to his desires. A most extraordinary influence attended his word, so that many persons were in great distress, and nearly twenty of them were brought into glorious liberty. Mr. Bramwell rose up in the chapel and with a loud voice exclaimed, 'Lord have mercy upon us! What

have we preachers been doing? The Lord has sent here this night a plain Yorkshireman, who has preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven.' The power of the Lord so prevailed in that society that, the members seemed to lie at one another's feet. The regular preachers appeared to assume nothing to themselves on account of their great usefulness, nor to envy the uncommon success experienced by labourers of a humbler degree. Mr. Pipe, in the fulness of his heart, cried out in the chapel the same evening, 'A short time ago, sister Barrett came, and brought some shavings with her, and kindled a fire amongst us. Now the Lord has sent us two Yorkshire lads, each having a bundle of chips under his arms, and by them has raised a flame, and laid us preachers aside for a season.'"

The subjoined account by Mr. James Wood, now of Liverpool, confirms one of the preceding statements by Mr. Bailey:

"In the year 1797, I was stationed in the Sheffield circuit with Messrs. Bramwell and Pipe. This was at the period of an awful event in the society, occasioned by the publications of one who has long since gone to give up his account to God. Upwards of nine hundred members left the society in the town of Sheffield, besides many others in the country places. Our congregations were very small, and grief was added to our sighing, by the discouragement which appeared to have seized the remainder of our people. However, we had some of the excellent of the earth with us, who laboured to strengthen our hands and encourage us in our labours. We often united in prayer to God, and agreed to commit our cause to Him, being assured that it was his own, and that He would plead it effectualy, and confirm the word of his messengers. Our hope was realized; and we had indubitable evidence, that 'the Lord of Hosts was with us; that the God of Jacob was our refuge.'

"A few weeks before Christmas in that year, the work of the Lord revived; sinners were awakened, and the mourners in Zion comforted, There appeared also a deepening of the work of grace in old professors, who were led to seek the perfect love of God. Wanderers from the fold were likewise brought under gracious relentings; their unfaithfulness was forgiven by the God of infinite mercy, and 'his peace again kept their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.'

"During the Christmas holidays we had various tokens for good, both in public worship and in our social interviews with each other. A considerable number of persons found the pearl of great price, and rejoiced in God their Saviour. Our quarterly love-feast was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. All present appeared to be on stretch for the blessings of salvation.

"On the first day in the new year, 1798, the members of the society met to renew their covenant with God. From the commencement of

the service, a holy awe appeared to rest upon all present; and while the directions for renewing our covenant engagements were read, deep seriousness and fixed attention were evinced by the whole congregation. When we had ended the reading of the directions, the people were urged to consider the importance of the subject, and to pray for strength of grace that they might be enabled to vow unto the Lord, and then to perform their vows. A proper space of time was given for this purpose, that all might sit in silence before the Lord and breathe their desires to him in mental prayer. During this silence the power of the Lord was generally felt, and our departed friend Mr. Bramwell was so filled with the holy influence as to break forth into the following exclamation, 'Glory, glory, glory be to God! He is coming." The whole assembly felt the overwhelming power of Divine grace. I afterwards heard of seven persons who found peace with God during the time we sat in silent meditation and prayer, and many others afterwards. Such 'a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord' I had scarcely ever known in a large congregation. This was not a transient visit, but an abiding blessing; it was not a superficial touch, but, a gracious stamp of the moral image of God upon many precious souls. Some of those persons who were then present are still living, and will recollect the season with holy gratitude to the God of all grace. It was indeed a faint emblem of the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured on the Disciples of Christ in Jerusalem. It proved that it was effected, not by human might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord."

CHAPTER XXII.

Character of Mr. Bramwell, by Mr. James Wood, Dr. Taft, and Mr. William Dawson.

The character which Mr. James Wood has given of his deceased friend, was accompanied by the following brief observations by his son, Mr. Robert Wood, who is now stationed with his father at Liverpool.

"There is no ground to fear, that too high a character of Mr. Bramwell for holiness and devotedness to God, and as a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, will ever be laid before the public. Indeed to do justice to that character, is not an easy task. Perhaps the real worth of any great and eminent man, — whether warrior, statesman, scholar, or divine, — can neither be fully appreciated nor declared, except by his superiors in those very things in which the man himself excelled; for

none but such can ascertain the difficulties in the way of his attainments, and the advantages, personal and relative, resulting from them. But to find a more holy or heavenly man than Mr. Bramwell, *Hic labor hoc opus est.*"

Mr. James Wood then says,—"The following appear to have been some of the leading traits of the late Mr. Bramwell's character:

"1. GENUINE SIMPLICITY.—He was truly a man of one business, intent on one thing; the glory of God in the salvation of his own soul and the souls of his fellow-creatures. The conduct of Joshua and Caleb was strictly copied by him in public and private life: '*He followed the Lord fully.*' No disposition appeared in him to compromise principle to trim betwixt God and the world, betwixt the praise of God and the praise of men. No attempt was made by him, in preaching or conversation, to comfort afflicted persons by lowering the standard of Divine truth; but he laboured to lead them to the only source of true peace by urging such persons to yield themselves to God, to sink into his will, and fully to rely on his promised mercy. Hence he constantly maintained the power of religion in his own soul; the flame of pure devotion burned there with increased brightness and vigour, and 'his rejoicing was the testimony of his conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the world,' He also enjoyed the blessed testimony 'that he pleased God.'

"This simplicity of spirit happily preserved Mr. Bramwell from deep depression when he met with opposition in his work, either from professors of religion, or from profane and wicked men; and prevented him from being unduly elated when followed by multitudes or caressed by kind and affectionate friends. Whether censured or applauded he was at his post of duty, doing the will of his Heavenly Father, and ardently labouring to promote his glory. Whatever toils or privation he had to endure, none of them moved him from his purpose to 'do the work of an Evangelist.' He sought, not the FLEECE, but the FLOCK; and he watched for souls, as one who expected to give an account to the Great Shepherd.

"2. DEEP HUMILTY, arising from a just view of himself as a fallen creature saved by the free grace of God though faith in Christ, and of the Divine perfections as displayed in the Holy Scriptures. This view was not obtained by mere reading and meditation, but in the use of all proper means, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Free from all affectation of this blessed grace, he possessed it in reality, and in an eminent degree. Hence in all his addresses to God in prayer, there was a holy reverence, deep abasement of soul, and a readiness to sink low at the feet of his Lord. Of course, modesty appeared in all his deportment; and, in all his intercourse with men, whether supeior or inferior of himself, 'he was clothed with humility.' This grace, like an upper

garment, covered him from head to foot; in the pulpit, and in the christian and domestic circles, this virtue adorned his character. Ready to sit at the feet of the Lord's saints, and when expedient, to perform the meanest offices for them, he was highly esteemed by all those who knew him and could appreciate in him the image of his Divine Master.

"This humility of soul in Mr. Bramwell was always properly blended with Christian dignity. In the pulpit, he delivered gospel truth with becoming authority: fearless of the frowns of the rich, or the censures of corrupt hearers, he always expounded the holy scriptures so as to make them 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness.' Every hearer had his portion; and all classes might see their real condition, in the glass of the gospel as it was displayed by this man of God. He magnified his office as an ambassador of Christ, yet without the least appearance of vanity or ostentation. So fully had grace changed his heart that he most splendidly reflected the virtues of his gracious Master, and shone with distinguished lustre in the Church of Christ.

"3. Holy zeal for God was another obvious trait in the character of my departed friend — The sacred fire was constantly burning on the altar of his heart. This prompted him to labour, in season and out of season, to the utmost of his power; and although he had a most excellent constitution, his love to God and the souls of men carried him out in exertion to the full extent of his great strength. In preaching, praying, and in singing hymns, the fervour of his soul beamed forth and provoked the zeal of many. Loiterers in the way to Zion, were reproved by his diligence; and by it lukewarm professors were either roused from their state of indifference, or were led to censure him for his earnestness, by way of self-defence. Wherever he laboured, the fruit of his holy zeal was found; and great numbers of persons will prise God though eternity, that they ever heard this eminent servant of the Most High.

"Strong faith appeared in Mr. Bramwell for many years before his death. When engaged in prayer, Divine promises were pleaded with holy confidence, and in full expectation of a gracious answer. Like Jacob when he wrestled with the angel, he would not cease to plead till a blessing was imparted. Whether he prayed for himself, his friends the sick, the Church of Christ, or for the world, he was mighty in prayer through faith. This grace was exemplified in the same manner in him, as it was in the Syro-Phenician woman, when she would not depart without a gracious answer to her humble petition. By this grace, Mr. Bramwell, like Abraham, was preserved from discouragement when looking at the difficulties which lay in the way of the accomplishment of promises; he considered the power and faithfulness of God as being able to remove mountains of obstacles, and to save poor perishing and destitute sinners who felt themselves lost and un-

done without an interest in Christ. By faith, he wrought righteousness, obtained promises, in weakness received strength, and put to flight, or to silence, opposers of Divine truth. By faith he wrestled with principalities and powers, with wicked spirits in high places; and was successful in his conflicts with these enemies. By this grace of faith, he overcame the flatteries, the frowns, and the allurements of an ensnaring world. By faith he was kept in perfect peace, and ready to every good work. How often have I happily witnessed the prevalence of his faith in prayer in the christian circle, and in the great congregation, when showers of blessings have descended, and the hearts of all present have been like melting wax before the fire."

The following is an extract from Dr. Taft's character of Mr. Bramwell, which the Doctor delivered at the close of a funeral sermon which he preached on the decease of Mr. Bramwell:—"In a very short time after the conversion of our departed friend, there was such a blessed revival of the work of God in Preston, that our society was soon nearly doubled. Mr. Bramwell was the principal instrument that the Lord employed in the revival. His zeal was like a burning flame of fire. He called upon families with whom he had no previous acquaintance, from one end of Preston to the other; asked them if they had any experimental acquaintance with vital religion; enlarged on its excellence, necessity, and the way to obtain it; and requested leave, not only to pray with them himself, but also to introduce some of his religious friends to converse and pray with them afterwards. By these means he established prayer meetings in various parts of the town, in which great numbers were very shortly awakened and brought to God.

"HIS EXTRAORDINARY PIETY.

"There is every reason to believe that from the time of his conversion to God, his piety had been truly exemplary. But from my earliest acquaintance with him, it has been of too exalted a nature to admit of any adequate description. No one could be often in company with him without reverencing him as a man of God, and being astonished at his unwearied progress in personal religion. Every day was with him a day of solemn and unreserved self-dedication to the service of his God; and every hour an hour of joyful thanksgiving, or importunate prayer. So insatiate were his desires after holiness, that the more holy he became, the more earnestly he desired to be holy. Whilst others were contenting themselves with an occasional taste of the living stream, having traced that stream to its source, he was living at the fountain head of blessedness.

"1. He was eminent for the experience of every Christian grace, but especially for that of Christian watchfulness. Whether he was alone or in company, he maintained such a recollection of soul, such a lively sense of the presence and blessing of God, that he was continually kept

from every thing that would grieve the Holy Spirit. For want of this vigilance of soul, numbers lose what they receive in answer to prayer.

"2. He lived in the constant enjoyment of God. Christians in general are so frequently grieving the Holy Spirit, by sin, by unbelief, or by lukewarmness, that they seldom obtain more than an occasional assurance of the Divine approbation, and that only when they have been more than usually importunate at the throne of grace. But Mr Bramwell could not have been hired to live a single day or hour under the gloom of unbelief or the misgivings of doubt. He experienced every day, and many times a day, what he sometimes called 'the Divine touch,' the Spirit itself sweetly assuring all the powers and faculties of his soul that all was right between God and his servant. This 'was his consolation in the season of adversity, and his glory in the day of rejoicing: it sustained him in the hour of temptation, and afforded him peace in the midst of trouble.' This inspired him with unutterable longings for the immediate presence and fruition of his Lord. He was equally eminent for the practice of every gospel duty, but especially for that of '*doing unto others as he would wish others to do to him.*' His benevolence to others, like that of his Lord, was not prevented by the unworthiness, ingratitude, or wickedness of those who solicited it; although at the same time that it interested itself chiefly in behalf of the household of faith, it excluded no person from its attention.

"3. He lived also in the continued *expectation of the glory to be revealed.* Several times a day did he 'go up to the top of Pisgah,' to use his own expression, 'that he might take a survey of his large estate.' That his treasure was laid up in heaven, must have been evident to every one who knew him. His wings of faith and hope were always plumed; he was therefore continually soaring above this vain delusive world into the very heaven of heavens itself. And while he was so delightfully employed, oh how did the most agreeable things on earth seem to vanish from his sight! Hence it was that he appeared to his most intimate friends almost like an inhabitant of a better world. So blind was he to the prospects, so deaf to the invitations, so dead to the enjoyments of the present life, and so wholly detached from its anxious cares, that he looked upon the world indeed with emotions similar to those with which his gracious Lord beheld it: He thought no condescensions too low, no exertions too great, no sufferings too severe, if by any means he might be made a blessing in his generation.

"4. Mr Bramwell was eminent for *his continued progress in holiness.*—Professors in general are nearly as often going backwards as forwards; hence it is, that if they do not utterly fall away, they make little or no increase. But it was very different with our departed friend. He never once evinced the least disposition to loiter or become lukewarm; but was continually on full stretch to increase with all the increases of God.

In many of his letters, and of our personal interviews, he assured me he was making continual advances in the Divine life; and it was evident to all, that the more he advanced, the more insatiate were his hungerings and thirstings after a still greater increase. With Julius Cæsar, he 'counted nothing done while any thing remained undone.' With St. Paul 'Not as though I had already attained,' was the language of his heart, 'forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before.' About six or seven months before his decease I visited him, at which time Mrs. Bramwell was suffering most exquisitely from an acute and dangerous disease; when he evinced such an affectionate and endearing tenderness towards her, and at the same time such an entire resignation to the will of his heavenly Father, that I did not know which to admire the most;—his sensibility, like that of his agonizing Lord, constrained him to cry out, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!'—but his resignation immediately induced him to add, 'Not my will but thine be done! Shall we not drink the cup which our heavenly Father has given us?'

"His character was free from those inconsistencies which are too generally observed among the professors of christianity. Whether he was in his family or among his christian friends, in his study or in the pulpit, he was actuated by the same spirit. The end he continually had in view was his own edification, the edification of his neighbor, and the glory of God. I have known him intimately more than twenty years: I have lived in the same house with him for twelve months together; I have therefore seen him in his seasons of relaxation, but I never saw him in such a temper as I could reprove. For the last two or three years in particular, he was *like a shock of corn fully ripe* and fit for the heavenly garner; or, to make use of a different figure, he was a tree of light whose vigorous and luxuriant branches were weighed down with a diversity of the richest, ripest fruit. There was an increasing degree of tenderness and affection in his spirit. His full soul was like a spring continually overflowing with the most amiable, heavenly, and benevolent emotions. Never did I behold a fallen child of Adam whose moral renovation was so complete, or one who was so angelic and saint-like. He appeared to be every thing his Lord designed him to be. In a letter which I have received from a pious and intelligent friend, on the death of Mr. Bramwell, he writes,—'His extraordinary, perhaps unequalled, attainments in holy meetness for the inheritance of the sainted spirits in glory, fitted him, under the rich grace of his Saviour, for a nearness to the throne; where, to the spiritual vision of common Christians, he will perhaps hereafter be hardly cognizable.—He was indeed one of those who, 'not touched but rapt,' seemed so far to have outstripped their competitors in the Christian course, as to have distanced them and a world of sinners. Still whilst we view with

amazement, and almost with dismay and despondency, the wonderful moral renovation thus effected in a fallen child of Adam, and the mighty deeds wrought through his agency, let us rather fix our eye on the boundless mercy and love of our dear Redeemer, equally free for us as for him, and let us be incited to ever-increasing diligence to emulate His holy, devout, and beneficient life.'

"HIS ARDENT AND UNBOUNDED BENEVOLENCE.

"Genuine piety and pure benevolence are inseparable. The grand criterion then which distinguished the true Christian from all others is, the pure, disinterested and unbounded benevolence, which St. Paul has so beautifully described in his first Epistle to the Corinthian church. Could we speak on the nature, excellence, and necessity of religion, with all the charming eloquence of a Demosthenes and a Tully, or even with all the sublimity of a holy angel, still if we be destitute of Christian benevolence we are but like 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbals,' noisy instruments of no value. The benevolence of our departed friend was as ardent as his piety was exalted; no adequate description therefore can be given of it. His compassion to the poor and distressed, and especially those of them who were of the household of faith, was like that of his heavenly Father,—it was in *constant operation*. His exertions to dry up their tears and supply their wants, were bounded only by his ability. The profession of his charity to the poor and needy, considering his limited income, was great indeed. It has robbed him of his clothes and money, when I have known it to have been very inconvenient for him to part with them. It has indeed sometimes been almost a repetition of the widow's mite. In the spirit of his Lord, he has actually impoverished himself to enrich others. About eighteen years ago, after a season of great scarcity, the poor in the society at Nottingham were in a state of peculiar distress; many of them had neither a sufficiency of food nor clothing; and at the same time the typhus fever was making such ravages among the people, that I recollect preaching a funeral sermon for eight of our members who had died in the full triumph of faith, within a few days of each other. I shall not soon forget the many powerful appeals Mr. Bramwell made during this trying season to the benevolence of our people, that, if possible he might procure food and raiment for our famishing and starving friends. Those appeals he enforced by every thing that is awful or alluring within the whole range of possible existence. I recollect his informing us from the pulpit, that he had only one coat, assuring us, at the same time, that as soon as he could get another, the poor should have the one he then wore. He declared, that in such a season of distress, our love to our poor friends must be in word only, if we could either hoard our clothes in our wardrobes, or accumulate our property; and that, if this were the case with any of us, he should certainly appear as a swift wit-

ness against us in the day of retribution. I rejoice to say these appeals were not made in vain: contributions in money and clothes were immediately made to a considerable amount. Last year, when the circuit debt at Salford was £200. Mr. Bramwell was very solicituous that ten persons might be found, if possible, to contribute twenty pounds each, and he would most gladly have been one of the ten, that an additional and very oppressive collection might not be made upon our people in general. Had his offer been accepted, in that case he must given his all.

"Some of his friends have thought that his charity was scarcely consistent with Christian prudence, that he ought to have expended only what he received from the connction, or at fartherest, if he expended the *income* arising from his private property, he should on no account have encroached on the *principle*. But his family are far from blaming him for any sacrifice which he made in the cause of piety and benevolence. They rejoice that he was actuated by so noble a principle; and He who commended the poor widow for giving *her all*, will not blame our departed friend. There are not many in the present day who are so much like their Lord as to act in this manner.

"But it was not chiefly for the relief of temporal and exterior miseries that our departed friend exerted himself. The spiritual wants of his fellow men were the principal objects which called forth his compassions. For the salvation of those among whom he labored, he often felt what no tongue can describe, and no mind conceive! No Christian minister can be indifferent about the success of the gospel. Few there are, however who feel any thing like that solicitude for its success which Mr Bramwell evinced. At many times this strong feeling robbed him of his sleep; it constrained him to exert himself in season and out of season, 'warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.' O how did his soul pity the thousands and tens of thousands who are only concerned for the honors and advantages of the present life! Considering the mere worldling as poor beyond the power of expression, he most gladly presented him with the pearl of great price. Fearing lest professors should sink into a lifeless form, he was continually cautioning them not to substitute the *shadow* for the *substance*, or the *means* for the *end*. Concerned that so few Christians have any experimental acquaintance with the deep things of God, he was frequently animating them to 'forget the things which are behind, and reach forth unto those that are before.' To be made a blessing in his generation, he exerted himself with all the unwearied asiduity and desire that animates a miser when he toils to increase his hoards, or an ambitious man when he stands to advance his reputation in the world. His zeal for the salvation, purity, and increase of the Church of God, seemed to eat him

up. Every grace of the Holy Spirit, as I have already said, appeared in a state of great maturity towards the close of his valuable life, but especially his compassion for sinners and his esteem for those who excelled in virtue. For many, many years, he lived in the constant exercise of that 'love which beareth all things, believeth and hopeth all things,—that love which endureth all things, not seeketh her own but the good of others. But if this love was not more ardent towards the close of life, (which was perhaps impossible,) it was more happily matured and purified. It was more like the love one might suppose an inhabitant of heaven would evince if he were permitted to visit our world for a short period.

"HIS UNCEASING, IMPORTUNATE, AND PREVALENT PRAYER.

"It was not with reluctance that Mr. Bramwell had to drag himself to a throne of grace; he had never to appease his conscience by excuses for not being in time, by apologies for brevity, or by evasions for neglect. He was neither unwilling to come often into the Divine presence, nor reluctant to remain there as too many of us are! He not only maintained a devotional spirit, but he was continually waiting for opportunities of calling into exercise. What was said of the excellent Fletcher, may with equal propriety be said of him; 'Without prayer he neither formed any design, nor entered upon any duty; without this, he neither read nor conversed; without this, he neither visited, nor received a visitant.

"On some occasions he arose in the middle of the night to pray; but this was not his general custom. His plan was to rise at four in summer, and five in winter. If he happened to be at any place where the people began their work at an earlier hour, he would rise earlier, unless prevented by indisposition, as he could not bear the idea of any one being occupied in his worldly business before he had engaged in the service of his heavenly Master. From the time he arose till he took his breakfast, he was generally engaged in prayer and reading the scriptures; but the greater part of the time was devoted to prayer. Thinking it of infinite importance to begin the day well, he had found that those days which were commenced in a spirit of importunate prayer were generally spent in a spirit of joyful praise. Always importunate at a throne of grace, he was peculiarly so in the morning. When I lived with him I was often awaked by his agonizing prayers and strong cries to God. After wrestling with God a considerable time, he would rise and read a chapter or two in the Bible, and then pour out his soul again in earnest prayer. This he repeated several times early in the morning.

"While we are in the present world, where tears and distractions prevail, our faith in Christ will not exempt us from painful trials and conflicts, though it will support us under them, and ultimately cause them to issue in holy triumphs. Mr. Bramwell had strong conflicts. He knew what keen temptation meant.

He felt exquisitely on some occasions before he had to preach, and especially before he went to a new circuit. When at West-gate Hill, a few days before he went to the Salford circuit, he repeatedly sent for a friend from Gomersal and another from Birstal, that they might wrestle with God together in importunate prayer that his presence and blessing might go with him. One source of painful feeling was, when his benevolent designs were misconstrued and his laborious exertions opposed; but he felt most acutely when the people among whom he laboured, remained in a state of formality and lukewarmness. He could not satisfy himself on such occasions with merely preaching, — he most ardently desired to see the fruit of his labours; and in order to this, he often gave himself to fasting and prayer, frequently with strong cries and tears. In these seasons of conflict Mr. Bramwell spent more hours in the twenty-four on his knees, than he did in bed; and he was seldom thus engaged for any great length of time, without receiving a gracious answer His prayers were as prevalent as they were importunate; and his triumphs were generally proportionate to the conflicts by which they had been preceded. If his journal had not unhappily been destroyed, we should undoubtedly have had a record of many striking answers to prayer. His prayer was as believing as it was importunate; he knew the Lord would answer if he continued to ask, and therefore he would not cease to ask, till his prayers issued in joyful praises.

"HIS SELF-DENIAL.

"Mr. Bramwell had a constitutional predisposition to corpulence; to prevent which, a most rigorous system of self-denial was absolutely necessary. But he was determined to sacrifice every thing which might obstruct his ministerial labours. At one period he tasted neither animal food nor fermented liquors for about six months; and at the same time he ate very sparingly of vegetables, seldom tasting any thing but turnips and a little bread. And, what was to him a most trying circumstance, he had perpetually to encounter and resist the unwearied solicitations of his friends to eat. For some years afterwards he not only ate very sparingly, especially of animal food, but generally fasted twice a week. He continued to maintain the most rigid temperance to the end of life, usually partaking of one kind of food only, and taking care to rise from his meals with an appetite far from being fully sated.

"It was also his practice, invariably to deny himself of every gratification, however innocent or desirable, that he believed would have any tendency either to offend his weaker brethren, or, in the least degree, to injure his usefulness. If eating meat would have proved a stumbling-block to others, with St. Paul he would have ceased to eat it. His own inclinations and secular interests were completely disregarded. He

sought not his own honor, but 'the honor that cometh from God only.' I sincerely believe that he did not cherish any disposition, affection, or feeling, but what was consistent with the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Self, in its sinful extreme, was in him entirely annihilated, and Christ Jesus had the complete supremacy. Thus he could truly say, 'I live, yet not I, — but Christ liveth in me.'

"HIS FIDELITY.

"It is not an easy matter for a Christian minister to be able to say with truth, 'I am clear from the blood of *all men*;' but to attain to such a desirable eminence, ought to be a most important part of a minister's study. If there has been one person since the days of St. Paul who might utter this expression with safety, Mr. Bramwell was the man. For he was faithful both in the pulpit and in private, to the rich and to the poor, to the professor and to the profane, to his friends and to his enemies, to preachers and to people. If it would not involve character, I could maintain instances in abundance to prove the truth of these remarks. Mr. Bramwell watched over all to whom he had any access, 'as one that must give an account;' and he was faithful to all, that he might give up his account with joy. The greatest delight which he experienced, was in encouraging the sincere and comforting the disconsolate; but he durst not sin against the Lord, by neglecting to warn the unfaithful and impenitent. If his friends were increasing in riches, how faithfully and repeatedly have I known him warn them against the temptations of affluence! If their riches proved a snare to them, he would not hesitate to inform them, that, though he once delighted in them, he could now do little else than mourn over them. If they were overwhelmed by affliction, he would hasten to comfort and encourage them, exhorting them to arm themselves with the same invincible patience with which their Lord was armed, that they might suffer in the same Spirit in which he suffered. But if, instead of patience and resignation, he heard the language of murmuring and complaint, he would not fail to censure with merited severity such a disputing of God's wisdom and goodness, 'Shall a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?' he would exclaim; 'What, has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? or is his arm shortened? Though you are corrected with severity, it is the severity of kindness and not of wrath. The design of this affliction is your salvation and not your damnation.'

"If a rich professor was a mere worldling, he would seek the most favorable opportunity of warning him of his perilous situation. O how often have I known him admonish young professors who were in danger of forming intimate connections with unawakened and impenitent characters; and shew them that there could be no fellowship between Christ and Belial — between a Christian and an Infidel.

"More than twenty years ago he felt greatly distressed from a fear that our preachers were decreasing in the life and power of religion. It is well known that he sent a circular letter to every Superintendant on that occasion, in which he mentioned his fears, and most earnestly entreated every one of them no longer to carry the mere ghost of a preacher round his circuit, but to wrestle with God in mighty prayer that the Divine presence and blessing might perpetually accompany them. I believe Mr. Bramwell's views of the preachers in general at that time were too gloomy; and I think it would have been a wiser plan if he had only written to those individuals respecting whom he might have the greatest reason to be fearful. But, notwithstanding this concession, I maintain that the letter did not originate from a spirit that said in effect, '*Stand off, for I am more holy than thou,*' as some have intimated. Nothing was farther from Mr. Bramwell than such a disposition; for his humility was as *profound* as his zeal was *ardent*. To suppose him destitute of christian humility, is to suppose him destitute of every other Christian grace. The writing and transmission of that letter was one of the greatest crosses which he at any time took up; for he knew that a host of tongues would rise up to scourge him, and that his enemies would be greatly multiplied. But he had an impression upon his mind, that God called him to the performance of this painful duty; and it was under the influence of that impression that he acted. Grossly as his motives have been misrepresented, and severely as he has been censured for that letter, I believe he never repented of its having been sent. That his faithfulness was severely censured by some persons, I am well aware, But he must have been of a very different spirit to that of his Divine Master, if all men had spoken well of him. Yet although some were offended by his frank and plain dealing, great numbers will have to praise God for it to all eternity.

"HIS CHEERFULNESS.

"Many persons who were but slightly acquainted with Mr. Bramwell, have thought that he was of a gloomy and censorious spirit; but when they knew him better, they were agreeably surprised with his cheerful and kind disposition. Always happy in his own soul, he delighted in the happiness of all around him. This was most evident however, when he was in the company of his intimate friends, because he was then the most free from reserve. When in large parties, there was sometimes the appearance of restraint or reserve about him, unless the conversation was very profitable; but if on these occasions his words were few, they were '*seasoned with grace*,' and calculated to enlived and animate; and not to depress and discourage those around him. In him cheerfulness had its origin in a consciousness of the Divine favour; and it was chastened with a heavenly solemnity, from a sense of the Divine

presence. He was therefore as much opposed to levity as he was to melancholy.

"HIS DESIRE TO DEPART AND BE WITH CHRIST.

"Mr. Bramwell was favored with the enjoyment of many invaluable blessings. He lived in the affections of his family, his spiritual children, and his numerous friends: he enjoyed a good state of health, had a consciousness of the Divine favour and a prospect of increasing usefulness in the Church. But he was so smitten with the moral beauty and glory of his Lord, that he felt unutterable longings for his immediate presence and fruition. He was neither averse to the duties in which he was engaged nor wearied with the length of his services. His life was a happy life; but he felt a persuasion that 'to depart and be with Christ,' would be far better. He was often surprised that heaven should bear only a tolerable aspect to the generality of his spiritual friends, when in his estimation it was so infinitely preferable to earth. Never did a weary traveller feel a more ardent desire to leave a foreign country for his beloved home, or a mariner in a foreign port feel more anxious for a wind that would waft him to his native shore, than Mr. Bramwell sometimes felt to depart and be with Christ. On these occasions, the language of his soul was, 'O why do thy chariot wheels delay? When shall I behold thee as thou art?' He felt this desire in a greater or less degree every day for a considerable time; but it was when he was afflicted or when his soul was in the happiest frame, that it was the strongest. When he was particularly blessed he had of late years frequently prayed that God would take him shortly to himself.

"HIS CHARACTER AS A MINISTER.

"His mind was furnished with a competent fund of general knowledge, and he was well skilled in that which is divine. When I was first acquainted with him he used to write his journal in Hebrew; but he was much better acquainted with the Greek language than with the Hebrew. He was well versed in a knowledge of the human heart. He knew how universally, uninterruptedly, incomparably, and incomprehensibly deceitful and wicked it is, while in an unregenerate state. Perhaps no man could distinguish better between the mere formalist and the sincere penitent. He knew how to unmask the hypocrite, expose the delusion of the formalist, and to encourage the sincere. At the same time that his preaching was truly evangelical, it was peculiar for the high tone of its morality. He would never suffer a fear of being suspected of LEGALITY to prevent him, from affirming confidently, vehemently, and constantly, 'that they who have believed in God be careful to maintain good works.' He took care to array the morality he insisted upon, in all the majesty of truth and all the beauties of holiness;' and having thus arrayed it, he was neither ashamed nor afraid to enforce it by sanctions the most awful and alluring. Mr. B. never represented the gospel un-

der one aspect only. To the careless and obdurate he represented it as 'a flame of fire,' by which they would be consumed. To the contrite and broken-hearted penitents, as 'a relief from their guilt;' and to the Christian believer, as 'a continual discipline of the heart.' He was extremely solicitous to awaken the careless and comfort the penitent; but he was much more solicitous to inspire the christian believer with incessant desires, an unwearied diligence, and constant watchfulness in the pursuit of holiness and usefulness. By his example as well as by his preaching, he discovered to our people the necessity of putting forth fresh energies and accomplishing new victories in their Christian warfare.

"He not only preached a *present* and a *free* but a *full salvation.* Having himself experienced for more than thirty years, that the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse from all sin, and from every kind and every degree of unrighteousness, he wished to see every Christian engaged in the pursuit of this salvation, and, after having obtained it, to make advances in it.

"His sermons had nothing of what an eminent living divine calls the '*Namby pamby*' of preaching. But although they were plain, they were full of point. Some have thought that Mr. Bramwell preached too much to the passions. If man was pure intellect, we might be censured for preaching to any thing else but the understanding. But what Christian minister, as well as Mr. Bramwell, does not oppose imagination to imagination, and passion to passion, as well as reason to reason? 'What is eloquence without sublimity, without energy, without pathos?' When Mr. B. was divinely assisted, his sermons were impassioned, and on some occasions truly sublime; but they were not the less argumentative on that account. He endeavored to feed the people of God with knowledge; and for this purpose, he '*studied to approve himself unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*'

"A peculiar '*unction from the Holy One,*' generally accompanied his word. Hence it was that such mighty deeds were wrought through his instrumentality. Perhaps few preachers since the Apostolic age, have been more eminently owned of God. I am inclined to think that he never traveled in any circuit in which he had not many seals of his ministry; in some of them he had many scores; and in others, many hundreds. I have no doubt that *thousands* of his spiritual children welcomed him into heaven; and it is highly probable that a still greater number are left behind to deplore his loss.

"Mr. Bramwell, in common with every fallen child of Adam, had his infirmities; but it was one of the great employments of his life to have them eradicated; and for this purpose he used strong cries and tears before a throne of grace,—till the world became crucified to him

and he to the world. If his journal had been preserved, as he was so much better acquainted with his own heart than any other person could be, it is highly probable many defects would have been depicted that no eye but his own and that of God had discovered. But whatever shades he might himself have discovered, there can be no doubt that they would have been completely lost in that blaze of excellencies which was visible to every one except himself. His praises are in all our churches. Making every allowance for his defects, his character approximated more nearly to perfection than that of any other with which I have been acquainted. I have never seen his equal; and I entertain no expectation of beholding on earth his superior in every thing which ennobles human nature and renders man divine."

The following character of Mr. Bramwell is the production of Mr. Wm. Dawson, of Barnbow, near Barwick-in-Elmet, who preached an excellent sermon, on the occasion of Mr. Bramwell's death:

"There was one particular feature in Mr. Bramwell's character, which can never be set forth to prominently, and that was, his 'exalted opinion of the Scriptures, and his growing attachment to them.' Few men approached so near to the character of the blessed man in that striking miniature portrait which is given by the royal saint, in the first Psalm; and especially in that part where he says, 'His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate, day and night.'

"Here was a mine of unsearchable riches; and here he was found constantly digging, not only by profound meditation, but by the most earnest prayer. He knew that it was the Spirit of God alone that could reveal 'the deep things of God,' and diffuse such a light upon the word as to enable him to enter into the true spiritual meaning of the letter of the great and precious promises of God. He was the light of the gospel, just glimmering on the first promise made to Adam, and the pleasing progression and increase of that light, through the Patriarchal and Prophetic dispensations, until the Sun of righteousness himself appeared, as 'the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' With enraptured pleasure he saw the infinite virtue of the Atonement of Christ, and the efficacious merit of that atonement, when presented before God, by Him who was at once our Propitiatory offering and our Great High Priest. He saw,—such was the glorious sufficiency of the sacrifice and the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ,—such were his boundless perfections, as '*God over all*,'—that he was properly qualified to be 'head over all things, to his body the church;' that, under the dispensation of the gospel, there was promised a greater measure of the Holy Spirit, than under any former dispensation; and that it was the duty of every Christian in general, and of every minister in particular, to pray for and to expect that abundant measure of divine influence which the blood, the offices, the professions, and the promises of the

Lord Jesus Christ most clearly held forth, as the proper subject of our petitions, and the object of our faith. On this subject, every feeling of his soul was alive; for he saw and felt that 'the gospel was the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth;' that it was the grand approved channel for the diffusion of the quickening Spirit of the Second Adam through a soul '*dead in trespasses and sins.*' Hence it was that he was in those passages of scripture in which Divine influence was noticed, either in promises of its being bestowed or in instances of its actual operation,—not more was said than was intended.

"Thus, when he fixed his eyes upon his exalted Head, he saw, that 'all power was given unto him, in heaven and in earth;' and that such extensive power was not the simple exercise of Omnipotence, but the quickening energy of a Divine life. So that our Lord spoke a most delightful truth, when he said,—'I am the Resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.' When Mr. Bramwell looked upon the dispensation of which Christ was the head, the Alpha and the Omega,—he saw that it was truly the 'ministration of the Spirit;' and, that in such rich communications, 'it exceeded in glory' any other, and every other, as much as the full splendor of the risen sun exceeds the comparatively feeble brilliance of the morning star, or even the silver light of the moon, when full orbed, 'she is walking in brightness' through a cloudless midnight sky. With these views, he considered, that it was the will of the Great Head of the Church, that his ministers should fully enter into all the glorious peculiarities of their high calling; that they should fix their eyes upon this object, which is so obviously exhibited in the New Testament in general, and especially in the 14, 15, 16, and 17 chapteres of the gospel by St. John; and that they should 'be endued with power from on high, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.' His soul was so deeply alive to this subject, that he dreaded the idea of his congregation supposing he indulged himself in adorning his discourses with the artificial flowers of human eloquence; and it was his constant, undivided aim, that his speech, and his preaching, should not be 'with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.' He considered that it was the duty of every minister to improve his intellect to the utmost, as is clear from his publication of D'Oyley on Pulpit eloquence. See also an excellent letter (No. 39;) addressed by him to Mr. A. E. Farrar.—But he would have all a minister's studies to be directly subordinate to this. From the above letter we see that he had no objection that they should commit their thoughts to paper; and this in a greater or less degree as they thought proper; but he would have them also to take these pulpit preparations and spread them before the Lord, as solemly as Hezekiah did Sennacherib's letter, and beg for his light to shine upon them, and

his power to accompany them, to the salvation of their hearers. He wished ministers to model their discourses, in such a way as would make both themselves and their sermons, 'vessels unto honor—sanctified, and meet for the Master's use.' This caused him occasionly to use expressions that might appear to some persons harsh, and scarcely justifiable, especially when he had a fear that a preacher had lost sight of this 'one thing which is needful' to insure any success in the ministry, and that he was passing away his time in a circuitous monotony of the same discourses, delivered without the least appearance of his soul entering into his subjects. He was tempted to lament that there was 'no law in Methodism, to silence a preacher who had lost the power.' But some will be ready to object, and say, 'If this scheme were adopted, you would have your preachers destitute of that variety in their ministrations, which is absolutely necessary to maintain and to increase your numerous and respectable congregations.' They who adopt Mr. Bramwell's views, think widely different; they believe that no man's talents grow more than his, and who, with a single eye to the glory of God, 'reads, marks, learns, and inwardly digests the scriptures,' and through the whole, looks up to the Divine Author, so to open and apply them to his soul, as to give him experimentally to know them to be 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, in righteousness.' Such an one may be viewed as a pupil of the Holy Ghost, who sits with willing heart, at the feet of his perfect teacher, until his soul is fully qualified for the 'work of the ministry, and he can say 'We have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.' Of all others, such a minister 'Speaketh unto me to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He is approved unto God; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' These unrivalled advantages of carefully attending to the word and Spirit of God, are suggested and confirmed by that eminent man of God, the late Rev. J. Wesley, in that most striking paragraph, in the preface of his notes on the New Testament, in which he remarks, 'In the language of the sacred writings we may observe the utmost depth, with the utmost ease. All the elegancies of human composition sink into nothing before it:—God speaks not as man, but as God. His thoughts are very deep, and thence, his words of inexhaustible virtue.

"And the language of his messengers also is exact in the highest degree; for the words which were given them answered the impression made upon their minds. And hence Luther says, "Divinity is nothing but a grammer of the language of the Holy Ghost.'—Surely then, the man who regulates his compositions by this Book of Books, and strictly

reviews them by the sun shine of inspiration, will not treat his hearers with dry bones of inexplicable doctrines and controversies, with the frothy bubles of trifling wit, nor with tinkling cymbals of words which poorly clothe some insignificant ideas. No, he spreads a table loaded with 'a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.' We are sure, that the congregations of such a man will neither be disgusted nor diminished, through any supposed want of variety, but will sit under his ministry, expecting him to bring 'out of his treasure, things new and old:' and while they entertain such expectations, they will not be 'sent away empty.' Such a man studies the various subjects in which the edification and salvation of men are concerned, with intense application. He pries into the depths of sin and satan, and detects and exposes their various stratagems and subterfuges, in such a striking, pointed, and personal way, that the secrets of the sinner's heart are 'made manifest;' and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in him of a truth.' His awakened and convicted conscience is surprised to hear the history of his heart and life so accurately described and he is ready to exclaim to his friends, 'Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did.' — When the awakened soul is looking out with wishful eyes for a suitable Saviour, the man of God, whose heart is under the full influence of 'that Comforter wich takes the things of 'hrist, and shews them to his people,' naturally introduces the Lord Jesus Christ to his view, and fixes the anxious gaze of the penitent upon him, crying out, 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!' And experiencing in his own heart the reality and power of religion, he speaks with authority; and such an *energy* accompanies his word that '*faith comes by hearing*,' the sinner 'believeth with his heart unto righteousnes' as a natural consequence; and the peace and love of God flow through the soul, so that 'with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' But a minister who imbibes Mr. Bramwell's sentiments concerning the vast importance of the 'power of Christ resting upon' a minister's heart, to make him a father in his church, a steward in his house, who can 'give to every one his meat in due season,' will not only be able to feed the babes, who have 'need of milk, and not of strong meat,' but he can lead on the family of God unto perfection. He can deal out, with a liberal hand, strong meat to them 'that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.' In a word, 'his tongue is as choice silver, and his lips feed many.' — That these views are not extravagant, is evident when we consider the vital union which subsists between the Lord Jesus Christ and his people; and more particularly that between Christ and his ministry. A man whose eyes are filled with the heart-cheering view of that gracious promise, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto

the end of the world,' does not expect too much, when he looks to have his earthen vessel enriched with this heavenly treasure. He does not set his mark too high, when he expects that the gospel, preached with simplicity, sincerity, and earnestness, will not 'come in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, in much assurance.' These scriptural views of this important topic, made Mr. B. say to a friend, 'that when the ministers of Christ ascend the pulpit, they should thunder and lighten, and their words should be words of fire.'

"Some might think that Mr. Bramwell carried things too far, in excepting *present effects* from the ministry of the word; but if it was an error, it was not without some ground, both from the scripture, and even reason, and the nature of things: and it is attended with considerable advantages to the person whose soul thus acts faith upon God, to produce the object of his wishes. If we admit this all-interesting fact,—that man is far fallen from God, is deeply guilty and abominable in the sight of his holy eyes,—that the devil works in the children of disobedience, and leads them captive at his will,—that nothing but a resurrection from the death of sin, and 'a renewal in the Spirit of his mind,' will make man acceptable to God and fit for heaven,—that 'there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved, but the Lord Jesus,'—that therefore there is no other MEAN to convey the salvation of that name except the 'gospel of the kingdom of God,'—that as this mean was the result of the infinite wisdom and love of God, so it is worthy of its Divine Author, and exactly fitted for all the glorious purposes for which it was intended,—that the ministers of the gospel are essential agents in using that mean for its intended end,—that the Lord has solemnly assured us, that, 'as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it:' (Isaiah lv. 10, 11.) If the word therefore be 'quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart:'—If ministers are 'unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:' If they 'are the lights of the world and the salt of the earth;'—then when they stand as 'ambassadors for God' to negotiate with a rebellious world, in the great concerns of salvation, they are justified in praying, in believing, in looking for *present* effects upon the souls of their hearers, either in the illuminating of their minds, the awakening of their consciences, or the rousing of their feelings with hope or fear, pain or pleasure, sorrow or joy, according as the word is made applica-

ble to their case. The pious and learned Dr. Watts evidently imbibed the same sentiments, and wished to impress them deeply on the mind of every minister. His observations upon this subject are so striking, and excellent, that we may be pardoned in making a few extracts from them. In his 'Humble attempt toward the revival of practical Religion among Christians,' and, in his 'Serious Address to the preachers of the Gospel,' he says,—'Go into the public assembly with a *design* to strike, and persuade some souls there, into repentance, faith, holiness and salvation:—Go to open blind eyes, to unstop deaf ears, to make the lame walk, to make the foolish wise, to raise those that are dead in trespasses and sins to a heavenly and divine life, and to bring guilty rebels to return to the love and obedience of their Maker, by Christ Jesus the great Reconciler, that they may be pardoned and saved. Go to diffuse the savor of Christ and his gospel through a whole assembly, and to allure souls to partake of his grace and glory.' But the good man well knew, that we are not 'sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, or to accomplish these great designs, but that 'our sufficiency is of God;' and therefore he properly adds, 'Go forth in the strength of Christ; for these glorious effects are above your own strength, and transcend all the power of the brightest preacher, 'Be strong in the grace of Christ Jesus; without him we can do nothing.' Go, with a design to work wonders of salvation, on sinful creatures, but, in the strength of Jesus, 'who hath all power given him, both in heaven and in earth,' and hath promised to be with his ministers to the end of the world.'

"But some may object, that 'there is now so much preaching of the most excellent kind, that the necessity of the extraordinary influence so frequently alluded to in the New Testament, and which was undoubtedly of vital importance in the first ages of Christianity, is in a great measure superseded.' Those persons who sit regularly under a plain and faithful ministry, have incalculable advantages, we are willing to allow, but that does not furnish a minister with reasons and grounds to lull every wish and every hope of *peculiar* assistance from God, in order that the word may have *immediate* effect upon the souls of his hearers; but when viewed in a certain point of light, the abundance of our outward means require a *greater* (not a less) measure of the Spirit, to render them effectual. The truths of the gospel, it is true, are of the first importance; but is not their awful interest on the minds of our hearers in some degree weakened by being rendered so familiar by frequent repetition, that the terrors of hell and the joys of heaven, are listened to, without exciting any correspondent emotion in the hearers, and ministers are ready to lament, and say, 'Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have

not wept!' The rich variety which we have of the letter of the word, should make both ministers and people more deeply in earnest, that God would afford a more abundant measure of the Spirit with it, that it 'may have free course, may run, and be glorified.' When this is the case, the most delightful results follow:—The truths which have been understood in theory, are realized in experience; the *power* of godliness is added to the *form*; the blessing is imparted, the heart is renewed, 'the old man is put off with his deeds and the new man is put on, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness:' and all this is frequently effected in the course of a few hours, when a gracious influence attends the word and ordinances, in a revival. The conversion appears a sudden one; and in its grand and awful crisis, it is so. But, if we consider how much and how long the mind of a sinner has been enlightened with the knowledge of the truth, which he has 'held in unrighteousness,' we may justly calculate that when the Decining Hour has arrived, such an one will 'adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things,' and like that sudden convert, Soul of Tarsus, will soon be ready to preach to his fellow sinners 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.'

"Mr Bramwell's soul longed for those measures of the Holy Spirit to be imparted in such a plenary manner, that its operations on the soul might always be marked by the most distinct evidences. He knew, that, in proportion as there was precision in the experience of a believer, there would be a greater firmness of mind and decision of conduct. A man 'walks in the light,' exactly as he has a precise knowledge of himself and of his interest in the atoning blood and prevailing intercession of Christ;—and therefore, the more clearly the operations of grace are impressed upon a man's soul, the more happily he walks in the light, and the more confidently and steadily he travels in the narrow way of Holiness, to everlasting life. But the sun in the sky of the traveller to Zion, is the Lord Jesus, shining by the beams of the light, power, and comforts of the Spirit of truth; and to that source we must apply for this salvation, and we shall not apply in vain. He will 'rise with healing in his wings;' and such shall be the powerful effects produced by him, that the happy subjects of his grace shall not grow up like the yew, or the oak, which are a century in arriving at any degree of perfection, but they 'shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall,' whose daily increase in size is almost perceptible to the observing eye. Convictions of this nature induced Mr B. not to rest in a mere justified state: he was resolved to enter into all the great salvation, of loving God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself; and as he enjoyed this blessing himself, he earnestly pressed it upon others. The blessing of a 'clean heart,' was the favourite topic of his preaching; when addressing believers, he exhibited the advantages of this salvation, not like

a man who spoke from hearsay. The holy feelings which thrill through the soul, the lively recollection of the presence of God, the intimate communion with God, the awful conflicts endured from the enemy, the possibility of retaining this salvation amidst all the duties, dangers, and trials of our occupations in life, the natural temper of the constitution, and the varying circumstances of our probationary state,—were topics on which he discoursed in a manner which clearly shewed that he spake from experience. On these subjects he could say, like his Divine Master, 'We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.' He loved the laconic style, and therefore often spoke much in a little. This state of being 'sanctified wholly, spirit and soul and body,' he generally expressed in these few words, 'a clean heart.' He did not see that the blessing could well be conveyed in clearer or better terms; and, in thus speaking, he shewed no defect in his judgment, but rather great correctness. A long circumlocutory manner of describing any blessing is not the 'most excellent way' of bringing it to our notice; because it places it in a more ambiguous light, and seems to remove it to a greater distance; and thus by weakening the appearance of the object, it weakens the exertions which we must put forth for its attainment. Let it appear in as bold and strong a light as possible;—let it appear already, attainable, 'at hand and not afar off;' and then the powers of the soul feel its attraction, and spring forward to grasp the prize. In this manner Mr. Bramwell preached the blessing of entire sanctification. He knew that a clean heart was purified 'from all filthiness of the flesh and that it perfected holiness in the fear of God.' He knew, that a clean heart was naturally most watchful against all evil, and most sensibly discerned the 'slightest touch of sin;' that like a pure mirror, whose fine polish most readily shows the least breath or moisture upon its surface, a clean heart shewed the slightest sully of the breath of temptation from the world, the flesh, and the devil;—that a clean heart was a proper but humble habitation in which Christ might dwell by his Spirit, and was well fitted for the increase of 'every good and perfect gift;'—and that a clean heart alone could sink into the deep experience of the Apostle, mentioned in the 5th Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, verses, 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.' He who enjoys the blessing, knows that the soul is 'justified by faith through our Lord Jesus Christ;' that it experiences a solid and increasing peace;—that through Christ the believer

feels uninterrupted access to and communion with a reconciled God, and 'rejoices in hope of the glory of God; but the believer who feels that God has created in him a clean heart, not only knows he is justified, and enjoys peace and communion with God, but he is also enabled calmly to bear the heaviest afflictions, nay, frequently he has power even to 'glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience,' &c. &c.

"Thus Mr Bramwell urged the blessing, as one which could be obtained in a moment. He knew that it was the 'gift of God' through Jesus Christ; and as it was the gift of God, which he can and will impart in a moment; so the hand and the heart must receive it in a moment; and thus he exhorted his hearers to look for 'the strong man armed,' to be cast out by Him who is stronger, and both his goods and himself, thrown out in an instantaneous manner. The gradual sanctification of the believer, which many pious ministers recommend, and which their hearers believe, is grounded on a misapplication of some Figures, by which the inspired penmen have illustrated our growth in grace; for instance, in those passages in which this growth is compared to the growing of corn in the earth, to the increase of the limb upon the body, or of the branch upon the tree; from these and similar figures, it is argued that sanctification is always imperceptibly gradual.

"It is presumed, that figures alluded to do not signify that a man's growth in grace, is imperceptible, but, rather, that it is progressive and certain, where nothing interferes to counteract its operation; Because if the interpretation be confined to this statement, (viz. 'that sanctification is only gradual,') we think it is considerably strained, not only from its original intention, but from the very nature of things. There is certainly a great difference between the acquisitions of the mind, and the increase of any corporeal substance. The knowledge of the mathematician, the physician, or the linguist, does not *imperceptibly* increase, exactly like the limb of a body, or the branch of a tree. We know that when the mind is active, there is a certain increase of knowledge; but as that knowledge increases in extension and precision of idea, it more clearly determines the ground over which a man has travelled, and he more distinctly knows that upon which he stands. Archimedes in the consideration of the knotty problem, that had long racked his genius, was aiming at a solution by every effort; but there was a particular moment when it was unfolded to his view, and, in a rapture of joy, he exclaimed, 'I have found it!' we cannot therefore say, that the growth of the knowledge of this great man, was exactly imperceptible, according to the illustration of the forementioned figures; and if those figures fall very far short of adequately representing the mere intellectual attainments of 'earthly things,' they are still more deficient in exactly de-

fining the nature, properties, and effects, of the 'deep things of God.' The believer in Christ has not only the rational discrimination of every unconverted man, but that rational discrimination is also 'enlightened and improved' by a 'spiritual discernment.' The man who 'lives in the Spirit, and is led by the Spirit of God,' has not an imperceptible knowledge of his wants, or of the specific blessing of salvation which he particularly requires. No, the Holy Spirit convinces him, particularly and personally, and, as he has a clear conviction of the special evil to be removed and the benefits to be bestowed, he can always aim at 'the mark for the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' To that mark, therefore, he bends the whole energy of his soul; he believes that it is not exhibited to his notice to create fruitless desires, and to tantalize ungrounded hopes; but that it is a blessing which God most solemnly intends he should enjoy; and consequently, in his progress towards the attainment of it, he resists and conquers opposing enemies, and surmounts every intervening difficulty until by a bold, humble, self-renouncing act of faith, his empty hand 'lays hold upon the hope set before him.' Firmly grasping the prize offered in the promises, he enters into the rest of faith, and is put into the possession of a 'new heart and a new spirit,' of which he feels a delightful consciousness by the witness of the Spirit in its undescribable testimony, confirmed by its comforts and graces; so that he knows, by happy experience, he is a 'new creature in Christ, that old things are passed away, and all things are become new.'

"The reality of this salvation is corroborated by a secondary proof, and that is furnished even from the effect of temptation itself. The enemy does not cease to tempt the man who *fully* enters into the gracious and holy designs of God's predestinating love in Christ Jesus, and who is '*Holy and without blame before Him in love:*' No,—like his Lord, in this will often be tempted by the devil; but now he does not fall with every blast; his new inhabitant that takes up his abode with him, make him acutely sensible of the approach of satan and of sin; and he looks up to God for his immediate assistance, to repeal the suggestion, and to 'perserve him blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;' and he always finds *him* a '*present help* in time of need,' and joyfully sings, 'Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.'

"It is unnessary for me to enlarge upon this topic; Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher have done it, in such a clear and masterly way, that other efforts are superseded; and though Mr. Bramwell's letters are generally very brief, yet we may find through the whole of them that he not only believed the doctrine most cordially from his heart, but lived a witness of its reality, not for a few weeks or months only, but for many years.

"This doctrine is attended with peculiar advantages to him that cordially embraces it. He who believes it to be the will of God, that the soul should be 'holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight,' always takes the guilt and shame of sin upon his own soul; and acknowledges, that the promises and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ are sufficient to pardon and to subdue all sin, and that it is owing to himself that he 'falls by his iniquity.' Thus, while he lays his mouth in the dust, and says, 'Behold I am vile,' he does not add the distressing thought, 'And so I must necessarily remain until death come.' Neither does he fruitlessly inquire 'Who shall deliver me?' and receive the answer,—'None but death! None but death!'

"He that believes it, therefore, has what he that denies it, wants; and that is a soul-reviving hope, that he shall not always feel the 'law of sin' thus working in his members, but that the 'law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus shall make him free from the law of sin and death; and his soul shall be rooted and grounded in love, and be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God. He sees also, that if it be the *will of God* that he should carry the 'body of death' to the grave, then it would be a sin, and not a duty, to pray for its destruction. For what is sin, but doing or desiring something contrary to the will of God? And to desire to be made 'free from sin,' when we believe it is the will of God we should not be so, surely puts a man in a very painful situation.—When he is asking God to 'cleanse the thoughts of his heart by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that he may perfectly love him and worthily magnify his holy name,' how can he expect an answer, when he has no faith for its accomplishment? How far does he come short of the man who acceptably approaches the throne of grace, and believes that, when he is asking deliverance from sin, God 'is able to do for him more than he can ask or think?' He that cometh to God properly, 'must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' But does the man approach him aright, who prays for salvation from the being of sin, (which of all things is the object of God's hatred,) and yet never expects an answer, till with him 'time shall be no more?'

"Besides, the hope of being saved from the carnal mind, and saved to-day, and saved NOW, stirs up the soul, and makes it shake itself from its lethargy. If he do not immediately obtain the desire of his heart, while he is seeking this salvation with all his might, he is happily saved from the crime and curse of lukewarmness. He is awake to his danger, duty, and interest; and he is saved from the surprise, the pain, and (what frequently ensues, the death that awaiteth a careless, sleepy soul. His desiring and believing heart comes into every ordinance, expecting to gain a real advantage; some clearer light into the great and precious

promises of God; some gracious application of the Word to his inner man; some farther knowledge of the stratagems of satan, and the glorious all-sufficiency of his All-wise Prophet, who was greater than Moses,—of his 'Great High Priest,' who was better than Aaron,—and of his glorious Prince and Captain, who is infinitely better qualified to lead his spiritual Israel to the promised land, than was Joshua. And thus, even allowing that he does not fully attain the object of his wishes, he is most assuredly 'growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,' in a way that a man cannot do, who does not adopt this blessed peculiarity in his creed. But I must forbear, as I am running in a path which has been trodden by the footsteps of Apostles and martyrs in former ages, and where the recent prints of the shoes of holy Fletcher and Wesley, Mather, Bramwell, and others, are yet happily visible. The striking descriptions which they have given of opposing difficulties, surrounding scenery, and unfolding prospects, that engage the attention of the man, who is 'leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ and is going on unto perfection,' render an apology necessary, for having at this length occupied the reader's attention upon a subject which has been more copiously handled by divines of consummate ability.

"But though I cannot display this salvation in as excellent a manner as it has been done by others, yet I beg leave to add, what I think is one grand reason why Mr. Bramwell enjoyed it, as well as believed it; and it is through a want of attention to this reason, that others do not enter into the same rest. This reason sometimes occurred to my mind when he was alive, but much more forcibly since his death. It was his unyielding resolution to 'deny himself, take up his cross and follow Christ.' This appeared in his early rising. He undoubtedly felt the allurement of a comfortable bed as strongly as others; but, like Samson, he broke the cords asunder, and with the Psalmist, he could say, 'O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.' Thus was he wrestling with God, like Jacob, if not until break of day, yet frequently before it; and I have heard it related by some friends, with whom he lodged when in the country, that they had seen him come down from his room to breakfast, the hair of his head sparkling with sweat, as if he had been engaged in the extremity of manual labour: such a 'wrestling Jacob was sure to be a prevailing Israel.'

"There was another virtue which Mr Bramwell practised, and which, there is reason to fear, is too much slighted by the professors of the present age, and that is fasting or abstinence. He was constitutionally inclined to be corpulent, and he dreaded the thoughts of it. He was therefore determined to keep under his body, and bring it into subjec-

tion, justly trembling at the awful thought that unless he attended to his duty, he might, when he had preached to others, himself become a cast-away. I believe there is not a solitary instance upon record, either in the Scriptures, or out of them, of a believer, or of a minister of Christ, exercising this duty, without deriving from it special advantages. How does the holy Brainard, when writing, as he says, 'from the sides of eternity,' recommend this duty! To a young candidate for the ministry, he writes, 'Oh dear Sir! let me beseech you frequently to attend to the great and precious duties of 'fasting and secret prayer.' And again, to his brother John, he says, 'I am now on the verge of eternity, expecting very speedily to appear in an unseen world;' and, among many excellent remarks, he adds, 'And now, my brother, I must press you to follow after personal holiness, to be as much in fasting and prayer as your health will allow, and to live above the rate of common Christians.'

"As the deeply pious in all ages have found so much advantage in the exercise of this duty, it is equally deserving the notice of all believers in the present day; and more especially does it claim the attention of Methodist Preachers. Their hearts can never be too deeply impressed with a jealous godly fear, lest, from the peculiar circumstances in which they are frequently placed, they should be induced to relax in this important part of self-denial. Justly beloved as they are, by a large circle of respectable friends, who think nothing too good to give them, who frequently invite them to partake of their 'carnal things,' and feel such a high pleasure in their company, that they are most cordially welcome to all the plenty and variety of their table,—there is a danger lest the body should be so indulged as to blunt the fine edge of holy feelings in the soul, which are so essentially necessary for the usefulness and happiness of the man, who appears as the messenger of God to the world and to his church, and who stands between the living and the dead. Mr Bramwell felt his danger in this respect, wherever he was stationed, and in no place more than in the Sunderland circuit. (See Letter 36, page 116, Vol. 1st.)

"Thus uniformly denying himself, and taking up his cross, according to the will of God, he rose in experience, above the rate of common Christians, which made him live in such an element, that no one could be long in his company without seeing and feeling how he had been distanced by Mr. Bramwell in spirituality of mind, — in being weaned from the world, and in devotedness to God. 'His conversation was in heaven; he sat in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; and his life was hid with Christ in God.' The Apostle could say, 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' If any man since the days of Paul, could adopt this language, it was Mr. Bramwell. My

the Lord forgive our non-conformity to the excellencies of his character, and help us to 'follow him as he followed Christ!'

"But, as there is the most perfect harmony in the Divine perfections, so is there always in the Divine operations. Cause and effect clearly manifest themselves in the works of God in creation; but much more so in the redemption and salvation of a soul, by Jesus Christ. The cause and effect in scripture, are so obviously exhibited, that he who runs may read. What a striking representation of both we have in St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, ii. 11, — 14. 'For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' They are also, if possible, still more clearly exhibited in Chapt. iii 4. 'But after that the kindness and love of God, our Saviour, toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works: These things are good and profitable unto men.' Now, such an admirer of the scripture as Mr. Bramwell, could not overlook so striking a subject. There were few texts to which he could subscribe his consent more heartily than to this, even in letters of blood, if there had been occasion. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' He knew that the tree must first be made good, and then the fruit would be good also; and this furnished him with an unanswerable argument for believers to press after purity of heart, because until that were obtained, the tree was not, in the full sense, '*a good tree*.' But he also very naturally and properly expected, that professors of sanctification should prove, by correspondent effects, visible in their lives, the reality and excellencies of the state of salvation into wich they were brought by grace.

"He thought it right to believe their simple testimony, in the first steps of profession; but he could not, he would not, credit the loudest testimony of assurance where the life did not clearly confirm it. He knew that natural life is not given merely for enjoyment, but for action; much less the Divine Life. It is not afforded, merely to enjoy promises, but to fulfil commandments, to take up daily crosses, to combat numerous enemies, to think in order to speak and act for God; and thus, most willingly and uniformly, to enter into the full discharge of every

relative duty incumbent upon them. He knew that the truly sanctified man, who lived in the light and life of God, possessed a most vigorous principle to enable him to be 'always abounding in the work of the Lord;' and that he had the clearest knowledge of the perfect rule, which directed him to be 'careful to maintain good works.' He knew that such a person could most nearly approximate to the consummate excellence of that *perfect pattern* who 'went about doing good,' and who said to all his followers, 'Learn of me.' He was, of all others, the most sensible of the motives to good works, viz. the furtherance of the glory of God on earth,—the test of his conversion in the eyes of men in this world, and also in the eyes of assembled worlds in the day of Judgment. In that day, not only will the secrets of all hearts be open, but the contents of the Books will be read; and then it will be seen by all, that we shall not be rewarded merely according to our *experience* but according to our *actions;* not merely for what we have received *from* God while in our probationary state, but what we have renounced, what we have endured, and what we have performed and done *for* him. The language of our approving Judge will not be, 'Well *sought!*' or 'Well *found!*' but 'WELL DONE, good and faithful servant!' No house will stand in that day, but the house of that man who heard Christ's sayings, and DID them; and therefore it is highly necessary, that there should be deep attention paid, by every professor of religion, most carefully to cultivate PRACTICAL PIETY.

"Mr. Bramwell was not only a powerful preacher, but also a bright example; and there was not a preacher in the Connection, who more faithfully warned his friends, when he feared they were in danger. I have sometimes thought, he would assuredly offend them, and in some instances, undoubtedly, his remarks would not be well received. But, in general, his counsel and warnings were tendered with such seriousness, affection, and propriety, that the persons to whom they were addressed, felt him to be a friend; and if they did not adopt his views, or follow his advice, they believed he meant well, and they departed from his presence with a higher opinion of his honesty and love of them than they had previously entertained.

"Some may perhaps think that I have already written *too much* upon these important subjects of consideration, unless I had written it *better*. That *too much* can be written of them, I cannot allow. That it might have been much better *expressed*, I most readily admit: And, from a conviction of the truth of this latter remark, I beg leave to conclude, by soliciting the forbearance, the candor and the forgiveness of those who may be offended with my performance. I can assure such persons, that it will afford the writer supreme pleasure to see that *they* have written in a way and manner much more worthy of the interesting topics which have now been introduced to their notice.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Instances of Answers to Prayer, Discernment of Spirits, and peculiar Impressions.

In some parts of the preceding Memoir, several remarkable instances of answers to prayer, discernment of Spirits, peculiar and powerful impressions, &c., have been recorded. To many persons such Divine manifestations may have assumed the appearance of misguided enthusiasm, or bold and daring presumption, but to those who implicitly believe the Scriptures, and who have carefully perused the lives of the eminently pious and good in different ages of the Church, these matters will bear a very different aspect. Such persons will discover an ever-active and energetic Providence at all times specially attentive to those who are the servants of the Most High and devoted to his heavenly pleasure. Where others can see nothing but blind chance or destructive fatality, they will be able to trace the finger of God. The observation of one of our celebrated poets may not be inapplicable in this place: When speaking of the true Christian, he says,—

> "He sees with other eyes than their's: where THEY
> Behold a Sun, HE spies a Deity."

To support these extraordinary phœnomena, it is presumed that much might be fairly adduced by way of vindication and defence; but, instead of endeavouring by argument to convince the profane and the sceptical, it is deemed more proper to append a few well-authenticated instances of similar Divine Interpositions, from which it will appear, — that in all ages the Lord has both heard and answered the prayers of his people; — that there never was a period when he said to the seed of Jacob, '*Seek ye me in vain;*' — and, that however inexplicable the footsteps of the Almighty may appear to the unconverted part of mankind, it is nevertheless a most animating declaration, that 'the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.'

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

Ecclesiasticus saith, 'The prayer of a good and godly Christian, availeth more to health than the physician's physic.' When my wife (said Luther) was sick, I prayed to God that she might live: So he not only granted that request, but also therewith he hath given us a goodly farm at Zoldsdorf, and hath blessed us with a fruitful year.

LUTHER'S *Table Talk*, *p.* 224.

The prayer of the heart, and the sighs of the poor and oppressed, do make such an alarum and cry in heaven, that God and all the angels must hear the same. O our Lord God hath a sharp listening ear.—*Idem, p.* 228.

As the king of Persia laid siege to the city of Nasili, the bishop that was therein saw that he was too weak (by man's help,) to defend the city against so mighty a king: wherefore he went upon the wall, lifted up his hands to heaven, and prayed in the sight of his enemies. Whereupon immediately the eyes of the horses in the whole army in such sort were pestered with an innumerable multitude of flies stinging them, that with their riders they ran away, and so raised the seige, whereby the city was preserved.—*Idem. p.* 229.

LUTHER'S PRAYER FOR RAIN.

In the year 1532, in all Germany was a great drought; the corn in the fields in a lamentable way began to wither. On the 9th of June the same year, Luther called together the whole assembly into the church and directed his prayer, with deep sighs, to God in the manner following

"O Lord, behold our prayers for thy promise sake. We have prayed, and our hearts have sighed; but the covetousness of the rich farmers doth hinder and hem in thy blessing. For seeing that through thy gospel they are unbridled, they think it free for them to live and do whatever they please; they now fear neither death nor hell, but say, I BELIEVE, *therefore I shall be saved;* they become haughty spiteful Mammonists, and accursed covetous cut-throats, that suck out land and people. Moreover, also, the Usurers among the gentry in every place deal wickedly: insomuch (as it seemeth,) thou, O God, wilt now visit us (together with them) with the rod; yet nevertheless thou hast still means whereby to maintain those that are thine, although thou sufferest no rain to fall among the ungodly."

After he had said thus, he lifted up his eyes towards heaven, and said "Lord God, thou hast, through the mouth of thy servant David, said 'The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him faithfully: He doeth the will of those that fear him, and heareth their prayers and helpeth them in their distress.' How is it, Lord, that thou givest no rain, seeing we have cried and prayed so long unto Thee? Thy will be done, O Lord! We know that although thou givest not rain, yet notwithstanding thou wilt give us something better, — a still, a quiet, and a peaceable life. Now we pray, O Lord, from the bottom of our hearts. If thou, O Lord, wilt not be pleased to hear and give us rain, then the ungodly will say, Christ thy only Son is a liar. For he saith, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you whatsoever ye pray the Father in my name, the same he will give unto you.' &c. Insomuch that they will give thy Son the lie, I know, O Lord, that we do cry unto thee from our hearts, with yearning and sighing. Why then dost thou not hear us?"

Now, even the same day, and within the space of half an hour after the people went from church, it began to rain so sweetly and mildly, (which continued for a whole fortnight,) that the grounds thereby were changed and refreshed in a most miraculous manner. — This happened June 9, 1532. — *Idem. p.* 224.

PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER.

Prayer preserveth the Church, and hitherto it hath done the best for the Church; therefore we must continualy pray. From whence Christ saith, 'Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' First, when we are in trouble he will have us to pray: for God oftentimes, as it were, hideth himself, and will not hear; yea, he will not suffer himself many times to be found. Then we must seek him: that is, we must continue in prayer. When we seek him, then he oftentimes locketh himself up (as it were) in a private chamber; now, if we intend to come in unto him, then we must knock; and when we have knocked once or twice, then he beginneth a little to hear. At last when we make too much knocking, then he openeth, and saith, "What will ye have;"— Lord, (say we) we would have this or that.—Then saith he, "Take it unto you."

In such sort must we persist in praying and waken God up. I am persuaded (said Luther) that many good and godly people are still among us who pray diligently. This sentence, or word, *Pray*, will have nothing else but pray, call, cry, knock, rap, &c.' and this we must do without ceasing. — *Idem. p.* 229.

A SICK WOMAN HEALED.

A woman at Isenach lying very sick, had endured horrible paroxysms, which no physician was able to cure; for her indisposition was directly a work of the devil, and an unnatural thing, occasioned by devilish frightenings, insomuch that she fell into a faint swooning, and thereupon had four paroxysms, each enduring the space of three or four hours; her hands and feet bended in the manner of a horn. She was chill and cold; her tongue rough and dry; her body, by reason of the disease, was much swelled; she seeing LUTHER, who came to visit her, was much rejoiced thereat, raised herself up and said, "Ah! my loving father in Christ, I have a heavy burthen upon me. Pray to God for me." — And so she fell down into her bed again. Whereupon *Luther* fetched a deep sigh, and said, "God rebuke and command thee, Satan, that thou suffer this his divine creature to be in peace!" Then turing himself towards the standers-by, he said, "She is plagued of the devil in the body; but the soul is safe, and shall be preserved. Therefore let us give thanks to God, and pray for her." And so they all repeated aloud the LORD'S PRAYER. After which, Luther concluded with these words,

—"Lord God, Heavenly Father, who hast commanded us to pray for the sick; we beseechthee, through Jesus Christ thy only beloved Son, that thou wouldst deliver this thy servant from her sickness and from the hands of the devil. Spare, O Lord, her soul, which, together with her body, thou hast purchased and redeemed from the power of sin, of death, and of the devil." Whereupon the sick woman said, AMEN.—The night following she took good rest, and the next day was graciously delivered from her disease and sickness.—*Idem. p.* 359.

ANSWERS TO SAMUEL FAIRCLOUGH'S PRAYERS.

He prayed much for others, and desired the like from them; which that he might obtain, he appointed stated times, when he and his friends engaged to each other to meet together at the throne of grace; which engagement, on his part, was strictly performed. A visitant once coming to him, and the question being asked, *whether he had kept the promise of mutual prayer*, the person blushed, and confessed, that some omission had happened on his part; to which this holy man replied. "Well, but I have been true to my word; and could either this table, or this chair, near which I have prayed, speak,* they might witness for me that for

* Something similar to this, in the specification of minute objects where private prayer was wont to be made, is alluded to by Miss Rosanquet in the following extract of a letter to the Rev. Doctor Dodd, which was sent to him during his confinement in Newgate, some time prior to his execution. The whole letter, which may be seen in DODD'S *Thoughts in Prison*, is every way worthy of one of the most pious women in England. Such documents as this completely refute the charge, that Arminianism teaches those who embrace its tenets to depend on human merit for their acceptance before God.

"I fear you have lived a long time in that friendship with the world which the Spirit of God declares is enmity with himself. However excellent some or many of your actions may have been, you have rested in the letter, and not in the spirit of Christianity: you have been contented without the experimental knowledge of these words, 'He that is in Christ Jesus is a new creature.' Your will, your affections, your desires, and delights,—have they not all been fixed on earthly objects? Rejoicing in the possession, or mourning the disappointment, your daily delight has not been in the divine communications of the Holy Spirit; fellowship with God has not been your chiefest joy; the pursuit of empty shadows found nearer access to your heart than the noble choice of following the despised Nazarene. Think not, dear Sir, I draw this judgment from the late unhappy event. O, no; that I only consider as the natural fruit of the unregenerate heart. The point I aim at is, the want of that change, that death unto sin, that new birth unto righteousness, whereby the children of wrath become the children of grace. St. Paul says, 'I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith:' therefore he was willing to be offered up, since nothing

seven years together, I have made mention of your name before God in prayer, between four and five of the clock in every Saturday in the afternoon, unless hindered by extraordinary occasions."

As he was a man much with God in prayer, so he was one whose prayers God did often, and sometimes very signally, answer. We must not transcribe the many instances of that return of prayer which he hath recorded; but we should be greatly wanting, if we did not make mention of some:

but a crown of rightousness presented itself to his opening prospect. He had kept that faith which purifieth the heart, overcometh the world, and quencheth all the fiery darts of the evil one.

"I remember, when I was about fourteen, the season in which I was favoured with your most intimate acquaintance, you once told a story which I shall never forget, concerning one of the Scotch Divines, who said on his death-bed, 'If every stone, timber, and nail, in this house could speak, they would bear witness to the many hours of sweet communion my soul hath spent with God therein.' O, Sir, can the beams of your house bear witness that your enjoyments have been such as eternity shall ripen? And this heavenly disposition, you must be sensible, can alone fit us for the enjoyment of the New Jerusalem. No object can give pleasure unless it meets with a sense which suits and apprehends it: The grain of corn is more welcome to the fowl than the richest pearl. To the soul whose treasure is yet on earth, the beauties of the lovely Jesus alone shine in vain. But, alas! who can break this adamantine chain? Who can unlock the heart bound down with twice ten thousand ties, and bring the captive soul into the glorious liberty of the sons of God? Can disappointment, can reproach, dishonour, loss, or even death itself? Alas! these may torment, but never change the heart: it is a sight of the crucified Jesus alone, which breaks your heart in pieces. This Jesus waits to do you good; hear him saying, Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help. O that you would cry; his ear attends to the softest prayer. This is my fear, lest you should forget there is no way into the sheep fold but through the door, and no way of entering that door but knowing ourselves to be lost and undone creatures, whose ways have been altogether perverse before him, and then to be saved by faith in Christ alone.

"How often has Christ appeared delightful even in a prison? Several have praised God for bringing them there, and by that means awakening them to a knowledge of their lost estate, that they might be made acquainted with a happiness till then unknown. Adorable Jesus! so work on the soul of this my unhappy friend, display thy pardoning love, and write it on his aching heart:

"'No; my best actions cannot save,
'But thou must cleanse e'en them;
'Yet when on thee I do believe,
'My worst shall not condemn.'"

His wife, about a year after his marriage, being great with child, became very sickly, and continued so till within a fortnight of her time. He had all along wrestled with God upon her behalf, and had spent much time in prayer with her; but now he was resolved to spend a day in fasting and prayer, by himself, upon her account; and his wife set apart the same day for prayer by herself, in another room. In the duty he earnestly begged of God, that she might obtain mercy and find help in the time of her need. In the evening and close of the day, while he was the seventh time upon his kees, he heard a mighty shriek not far from the house, which he guessed to be the voice of his wife,—and so it was; for his wife, having spent also most part of the day in prayer, did in the evning walk abroad, meditating upon the promises of God, made to persons in her condition, and contemplating the infinite power of God whereby he was able to make good his promise in the greatest difficulties. Her mind was deeply engaged herein; whilst going by the side of a pond in an adjoining field, her feet slipped so, as she fell head and ears into the water. But she shrieked in her fall; which her husband hearing, and coming down hastily, missed her within doors, and ran so hastily to the pond that although she had sunk twice, yet he caught her by the hand before she sunk the third time. This happened in the month of October, when the water was exceeding cold; but it pleased God, that neither her fall caused abortion, nor the cold produced any evil effect.

A more memorable instance of the answer of prayer is that which follows, concerning his youngest son, for whom, upon a Saturday about four in the afternoon, (which was one of stated times of prayer for his friends and relations,) his heart was much enlarged in prayer, being then walking in the fields and pouring out his soul for all his relation, but especially for that little one who was his youngest, and then about two years old. This child at that hour a servant had taken up with her into the garret, and had set him by the window while she swept the room, and so carelessly neglected to have her eye upon the little one, that the child, looking out at the window upon a company of young ducks which were swimming in a vessel of water right under the casement, thrust its body so far out, that it fell down and pitched first upon the eaves of the next flour, with that force that it broke above a dozen tiles off from the place, and with them fell down to the ground, but not into the vessel of water which stood perpendicular to the window, but exactly between that vessel and a large door which lay very near it, and upon which the meat for those ducks was laid. Had it fallen a quarter of a yard on either hand, its brains had been dashed out, either by the door or vessel. But God, by the ministration of his angels, so ordered it, that although the height of the place caused a dizziness and a swoon for a few mo-

ments, yet the child was no sooner taken up, but immediately it came to life again, and there was not the least bruise or hurt inward or outward no not the least razing of the skin by any of the tiles that fell with it; but within one quarter of an hour it went up and down the house as it had formerly done. Our good father looked higher than to any natural causes of his child's preservation, for when he was returned from his walk which was near half an hour after the fall, at which hour he had prayed so earnestly to God for this child, being told the story of the fall, and having observed the height of the window, the broken tiles, the posture of the vessel and door, and the place where the child was taken up safe, he presently called all his family, and many of the neighbours together, to join with him in giving God praise for that wonderful return of prayer made at that instant, for that little one.

To mention but one instance more:—God having given him a seventh child, it pleased God that when it was about half a year old, it was strangely afflicted with pain and sickness, of which neither physicians nor surgeons could give any account. Many eminent persons of both sorts had inspected the child, but could not in the least guess at the nature of its distemper. Many weeks passed wherein the child languished and did daily fill the ears of its parents with its frequent loud shrieks. The parents hereupon set apart a day of prayer, solemnly to seek God for this poor afflicted infant; in which service God was pleased to give him great assistances of his Spirit and enlargement of heart, and the very next morning while the mother had the sick child in her lap, and rubbed its naked head with her hand, she felt a pin to prick her hand, at which very much wondering, she looked narrowly into the ear of the child, and there espied the small end of a large pin. It was very difficult to discern the end thereof, and more difficult to draw it forth, the head of the pin being downward, and almost eaten up with rust; but it being pulled out, the child was presently at ease, and recovered its health in a very short time.

CLARKE'S *Lives of Eminent Persons.*

ANSWERS TO DR. SAMUEL WINTER'S PRAYERS.

His power and prevalency in prayer were very remarkable. The wise Solomon tells us, (Prov. xii. 2.) that 'a good man obtaineth favor of the Lord,' that is, he hath what he will of God. It is written of Luther, *Iste vir potuit a Deo quicquid voluit*, 'That by his prayer he could prevail with God at his pleasure." Melancthon and Myconius, being sick of desperate diseases, were both recovered by Luther's prayers. Sozomon saith of Appollonius, that "he never asked any thing of God which he obtained not. Blessed is he that hath what he will, and wills nothing but what he should!" "The persons of Saints," saith a reverend Divine, "are like secret pledges of common quiet; and their

meditations and prayers are a shield in the earth against the wrath of heaven." "Faithful prayer," saith another, "is able, after a sort, to alter God's mind, and to transfuse a dead palsy into the hands of Omnipotency; as Exod. xxxii. 10, where God is fain to bespeak his own freedom, 'Let me alone.'" We have many examples in Scripture of the power and efficacy of prayer. Jacob would have a blessing, and by prayer wrestled and prevailed. The woman of Canaan (Mat. xvi. 23,) came for a cure, and a cure she would have; and she had it at last, with an high commendation of her faith. God heaps mercies upon his suppliants, and blames them for their modesty in asking: Hitherto (said he) ye have asked nothing; [that is, 'nothing to what you might and should;] 'Ask and have, that your joy may be full.' (John, xvi. 24.) Many other scripture examples might be produced, but lest any should think that the like are not to be found in our days, take notice of these instances following:

When an order was sent to Mr. Winter from the Parliament, to attend their Commissioners into Ireland, his wife was very unwilling; and some of their near relations came on purpose to dissuade him. In this strait, he retired into his study, (as his usual manner was in like cases,) and there with much earnestness spread the matter before God, craving his direction therein. And the Lord was pleased to set it upon his spirit, that he should go, and be carried in safety thither, and there become an instrument of converting many souls to God. When he had declared this to his wife and friends, they acquiesced, and so he resolved upon that journey: and though they took shipping in the midst of winter, and went with a master that was not well acquainted with those seas, yet they found the seas calm, and their passage so speedy, that the captain of the ship said, in his whole life he had never known so calm and speedy a passage.

Not long after Mr. Winter's coming into Ireland, he went with the Commissioners unto Kilkenny, where Col. Jones's wife fell sick of the yellow jaundice, and some other distempers; her husband invited certain ministers, and some other friends to spend some hours in prayer in her behalf: and Mr. Winter was the last man that prayed; but before he began, he asked her, whether she had faith to be healed? She answered, she thought she had. Then he went to prayer, and wrestled exceedingly with God; and when he had done, he went again to her, and said, *That she should live, and not die at that time:* at this saying of his, his wife and sister were much troubled; and told him in private, they would have given much money rather than that he should have spoken so. But he again told them, that she should not die at that time. Yet she continued very weak for a month or more, till her doctors gave her up for a dead woman; whereupon Mr. Winter's wife again blamed him, for his confident saying, that she must live; to which he smilingly

answered, 'Well, she is not yet dead!' At length her disease so prevailed, that she lost the use of her senses, and her servants that stood weeping about her said, 'Now she is near death indeed!' The Saturday following, as Mr. Winter sat at dinner, a messenger came to him from Col. Jones, to tell him, that if he would see his wife alive, he must come away presently, for she was now a dying. At this Mrs. Winter was much troubled, because of her husband's former confidence in promising her life. But Mr. Winter made no great haste to be gone, saying, that he knew well when God answered his prayers, and when not. After he had dined he went to the house where he found the Colonel sitting by her, ready to close her eyes so soon as the breath departed out of her body, for so she had enjoined him in the time of her health. She lay speechless, and without the use of her senses, not answering, nor moving her eyes, though her husband and Mr. Winter called unto her; whereupon her husband judged she had lost her hearing. Mr. Winter requested that he might pray with her; but her husband refused, saying, she was senseless, and had been dying all that morning. Mr. Winter urged again that he might pray: 'No,' said the Colonel, 'it is to no purpose; she is a dead woman.' Yet Mr. Winter urged the third time that he might pray, saying, 'Her life is yet in her;' and so he went to prayer with much earnestness and importunity. When prayer was ended, Mr. Winter going to her bedside, she looked upon him, and with a smiling countenance said, 'O, see the fruit of prayer! O, see the fruit of prayer! Set me up, and give me something to eat: I am cured, but not by the art of Doctors: only fervent prayers have prevailed with God for me.' They asked her what she could eat? She answered, 'Any thing.' They gave her some bread and butter, of which she ate pretty heartily. Then did her husband send for her Doctors; but she bid them not provide any more physic for her, saying, that she would take none; for she would not dishonor God, nor wrong prayer so much as to take any more physic. Nor could she by any means be persuaded to it. On Monday following Mrs. Winter hearing that Mrs. Jones was walking in her garden, went to see her, and found her there. So soon as she saw Mrs. Winter, she went to meet her, and said, 'O, see the fruit of prayer!' Mrs. Winter blessed God for her recovery; whereupon she said, "My Doctors would have me take more physic: but it is God that hath cured me, and he only shall have the praise of it. I will take nothing of them; they shall not boast that they have cured me; for God by prayer hath done it." And indeed herein God made good that gracious promise, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.' (James v, 15.)

Some months after Mr. Winter with his family removed to Dublin; and after some time the aforesaid Mrs. Jones fell sick again; whereupon Mr. Winter and his wife, and her sister, went to visit her. When

they came she called for Mr. Winter to pray with her. A lady that was present, coming to Mrs. Winter's sister, said, "Do you think this good woman will recover, or not'" She answered, "I know not yet; but when my brother Winter hath done, I will tell you more." When Mr. Winter had ended his prayer, she came to her again, and said, "What think you now?" She answered, she believed that she would not recover, and so said Mrs. Winter also. The reason whereof was, because they observed that in his prayer he was more earnest in praying for the spiritual and eternal welfare of her soul, than for her bodily health. When they were returned home, Mrs. Winter asked her husband what he thought of her? He answered, "She will die." And this he said, because, when in prayer he would have begged of God to restore her to health, he could not do it; but could only pray for her eternal happiness. It is the observation of a reverend divine, "That when God intends not to hear, he layes the key of prayer out of the way, as being loath that such precious breath as that of prayer is, should be without full and clear success." At length Mrs. Jones finding herself very weak, sent for Mr. Winter to pray with her, and after prayer she said unto him: "Sir, I fear you love me not so much as formerly. God heard your prayers for me when I was dying at Kilkenny, but now you do not pray so earnestly for my life as you did then."—"No," said he, "I neither do, nor can do it, though I love you as well as ever: for when I would pray for your life, my tongue is turned to pray for your eternal welfare. Therefore I believe that you are not a woman for this world." And it pleased God shortly to take her to himself.

At another time Mrs. Winter's sister going for England, left her only son with her; after a while the child fell into a high fever, and one morning the maid, with whom the child lay, came to her mistress and told her, she feared the child had a plague, for that he had many spots in his bosom, and the plague at this time was in Doublin. Mrs. Winter presently sent for a doctor, who when he had seen him, said, he much feared the child's life. Hereupon Mrs. Winter went to her husband in his study, requesting him that he would be earnest with God for the child's life. At noon, when her husband came down, we asked him what he thought of the child? He bade her not trouble herself, for the child would live. Before the next day the child began to amend and within a few days was perfectly well.

Whilst they were in Dublin, Mrs. Winter's sister's husband, being upon his occasions in London, fell dangerously sick; his Physicians after a time gave him up for dead. Another of Mrs. Winter's sisters wrote her word of it; adding, that she believed before that letter could come to her hands he would be dead and buried. As soon as they received it, his wife desired that that afternoon might be set apart to seek God; and accordingly some ministers and christians were invited to meet to-

gether for that end. When the time was come, Mrs. Winter requested her husband to come away, for the company were met: He had desired her to go before; for he must endeavour to know whether he was yet living or not. When some of the ministers had prayed Dr. Winter came in. They prayed with submission, that if he were yet in the land of the living, the Lord would be pleased to be his physician. But in the close of the day, when Dr. Winter came to pray, he spake with confidence, that he was alive. When Dr. Winter was risen from his knees, he went to his sister-in-law, and took her by the hand, saying, "Be of good comfort, for your husband is alive, and shall recover, and you shall see him again with joy." — She crying aloud, said, "Ah brother! I fear he is dead: Do you think he is alive?" — "I know," said he, "that he is alive," and repeated over his former words: and accordingly in their next letters they heard of his recovery.

The last time the soldiers pulled the Parliament in pieces, Dr. Winter and his friends in Dublin were in great fears of the confusions that were likely to follow. Whereupon he kept weekly fasts with his congregation for a great while together: and one time as he was praying, in imitation of Abraham's praying for Sodom, he used such like expressions: — "Lord, wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty thousand righteous within these three kingdoms: wilt thou also destroy, and not spare these nations for fifty thousand righteous, that are therein?" And when he came to the last number of ten thousand, as he kneeled against a post in the room, he saw a great shining light about him, and heard perfectly a voice, saying, "The nations shall be spared for ten thousand righteous persons' sake!" Upon this he turned his prayer into praises and thanksgivings, insomuch as all the company could not but take notice of it, though none of them heard the voice but himself only. Dr. Winter afterwards told his wife, that he perceived a voice might be spoken to one in a room where many were, and yet none else hear it. And when he lay upon his death-bed, his wife asked him again about it, and said that he did as certainly and plainly hear it, as he heard her then speak.

After he returned to England, he, with his wife, sojourned for a month in Dr. Drake's house, in which time his second daughter fell sick of the twisting of her guts. She lay in great torments from Monday till Saturday night; and the Doctors had little hopes of her life. On Saturday in the evening Dr. Winter came in, and meeting her sister, enquired how she did? Her sister answered, she was near death; for that the Doctors having prescribed something to be given her in a spoon, her teeth were so set that her aunt and she had much ado to open them to put it into her mouth. "But," said she, "Sir, what do you think of her?" "Give me," said he, "a candle that I may go into my chamber, and anon I will tell you whether she shall live or die." when he came down, she

met him at the foot of the stairs, and asked him, what he thought of her now? He answered, "Your sister will live." And so going up into his chamber, he spake to his wife, and bid her use all means for her recovery; "For," said he, "she must not die at this time." His wife begged of him not to be so confident, for there were no hopes of her recovery; yet he told her mother and aunt, that she should recover. His wife was much troubled at it, notwithstanding her many experiences. But the next day signs of recovery began to appear, and within a little space she was perfectly well. Other instances of his power and prevalency in prayer might be given; but these may suffice, as evidently demonstrating, that the Lord our God never said to the seed of Jacob, '*Seek ye my face in vain.*' *Idem.*

ANSWERS TO RICHARD BLACKERBY'S PRAYERS.

He was a mighty man in wounding consciences by the sword of the Spirit, and in healing them by the blood of Jesus. His voice used not to be very loud, but his preaching was accompanied with such an authority of the Divine presence and power of the Spirit, that souls fell exceedingly under the yoke of Christ by his ministry; so that he has been constrained to acknowledge to some intimate friends, (though far from boasting,) that he had reason to believe God had made him a spiritual father to above two thousand persons.

Indeed the word of God in his lips was so unmixt with any appearance of any by-respects, and came so pure, as it were immediately from the Holy Ghost, that, like the word of God, '*It was very quick and powerful*;' (Heb. iv.) and men soon became either converts to it, or fliers from it, or, with all their might, fighters against it. He often received immediate answers of prayer. I heard an eminent divine once say, he knew eighteen persecutors taken away remarkably upon his fasting and prayer. God seemed also to make a covenant for him with the beasts of the field. His daughter Burrel was much affected with a remarkable Providence, which happened to him when she was waiting on him one day, to visit one afflicted in conscience. Their way lay through a field where was a raging bull, that used to do much mischief, which beast seeing them, made towrds them with great fury; and being come very near them, he put off his hat, and prayed in these words, "Lord! if our way be of thee, stay the fury of this beast;" which immediately stopped, and turned from them. The first time when the Scots' army came into England, he said to some who were much troubled for it, that the army should go back without a stroke struck; and so they did. He said after the battle of Naseby, that many strict professors of religion should have rest for a little time; but afterwards a blacker time would come unto them than ever they had; which was in part fulfilled: but he used to add, the storm would not last very long. And these were his

very last words which he spake at his death. There is a sharp storm coming, but it will be but short. The former part is already proved; God grant the other part may also be accomplished. — *Idem.*

DIVINE INTIMATIONS.

The Lord did also many times give him [Mr. John Rowe,] several hints what he was about to do. When any great thing was approaching relating to himself, his family, or the church, he had usually, some intimations from God concerning it. On a time he was observed to be very sad, saying, that God had intimated to him, that he would make some change in his family; but what it would be, he knew not. However he made this use of it, to set his house in order; and not long after the Lord took away a near relation, which proved a great affliction to him. And though the Lord did many extraordinary things, yet did he not expect them, neither did he, (as Luther speaks of himself,) indent with the Lord that he should give them unto him, much less would he boast of things of this nature. He was content with the plain naked word of God, and all his study and delight lay therein.

He was much and frequent in prayer: He often prayed with his wife alone; and when any great occasion fell out in the day, he would retire into his closet to ask counsel and a blessing from the Lord. Every month he kept a private fast by himself, (besides what he did upon emergent occasions,) to seek the Lord, and the better to prepare himself for the Lord's Supper, at which time also he had the concernments of the Church much upon his heart. Whenever any affliction befel him, or any in his family, or of his relations, his constant course was, to seek the Lord in an extaordinary way. And if there were any great business that he was to undertake, or any great strait wherein he needed Divine counsel or protection, he still set time apart in a more than ordinary manner, unto which he used to have some gracious return.— *Idem.*

ANSWERS TO THE PRAYERS OF GEORGE FOX.

Coming to Mansfield Woodhouse, there was a distracted woman under a Doctor's hand, with her hair loose about her ears. He was about to let her blood, she being first bound, and many people about her, holding her by violence; but he could get no blood from her. I desired them to unbind her and let her alone, for they could not touch the spirit in her by which she was tormented. So they did unbind her; and I was moved to speak to her, and in the name of the Lord to bid her be quiet and still; and she was so. The Lord's power settled her mind, and she mended. Afterwards she received the truth, and continued in it to her death; and the Lord's name was honoured; to whom the glory of all his works belongs.

Many great and wonderful things were wrought by the heavenly power in those days: for the Lord made bare his omnipotent arm, and manifested his power to the astonishment of many; by the healing virtue whereof many have been delivered from great infirmities, and the devils were made subject through his name; of which particular instances might be given, beyond what this unbelieving age is able to receive or bear. Blessed for ever be the name of the Lord, and everlastingly honoured, and over all exalted and magnified be the arm of his glorious power, by which he hath wrought gloriously! Let the honour and praise of all his works be ascribed to him alone!

GEORGE FOX's *Journal*, *p.* 26.

There was in that town, (Twy-Cross, in Leicestershire,) a great man that had long lain sick, and was given over by the Physicians. Some friends in the town desired me to visit him. I went up to him in his chamber and spake the word of life to him, and was moved to pray by him; and the Lord was entreated and restored him to health.

Idem. p. 28.

And having taken my leave of friends at London, and had a glorious meeting with some of them at John Elson's in the morning, I set forward with my wife and her daughter Susan by coach (for I was not able to travel on horseback) towards the north, many friends accompanying us as far as Highgate, and some to Dustable, where we lodged that night. We visited friends and were visited by them at Newport-Pagnel, Northampton, and Cassel, where, amongst others, came a woman, and brought her daughter for me to see how well she was; putting me in mind, "That when I was there before she had brought "her to me much troubled with the King's Evil, and had "then desired me to pray for her," which I did, and she mended upon it; praised be the Lord!

Idem. p. 481.

While I was at Worminghurst in Sussex, James Claypole of London (who with his wife was there also,) was suddenly taken very ill with so violent a fit of the stone, that he could neither stand nor lie; but through the extremity of pain cried out like a woman in travail. When I heard it, I was much exercised in spirit for him, and went to him.

After I had spoken a few words to him, to turn his mind inward, I was moved to lay my hand upon him, and prayed the Lord to rebuke his infirmity. As I laid my hand on him, the Lord's power went through him; and, by faith in that power, he had speedy ease, so that he quickly fell into a sleep. When he awaked, the stone came from him like dirt; and he was so well, that the next day he rode with me five-and twenty miles in a coach, though he used formerly (as he said) to lie sometimes two weeks, sometimes a month, with one of those fits of the stone. But the Lord was entreated for him, and by his power soon

gave him ease at this time: blessed and praised be his holy name therefore! —*Idem p.* 564.

ANECDOTE OF THE LATE REV. J. JONES, OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

Mr. Jones was a man of much prayer; few Christians have been so frequent, or so persevering at the throne of grace. When the church of Christ was first planted at St. John's under great persecution, he told me that more than once he found his mind so universally drawn out in prayer for the conversion of individuals, who were then his bitterest persecutors, that he could not rest till he had called the church together, and appointed a day of prayer and fasting to solicit a throne of grace for their conversion, which he never failed of obtaining.

I was witness to an instance of his perseverance in prayer, while I had the pleasure of enjoying his company at St. John's. A member of his church, master of a sloop that traded to America, in company with several others, was overtaken in a dreadful storm, in which some of them foundered, and were never more heard of; among this unhappy number, it was universally concluded Mr. Jones's friend had suffered; notwithstanding this, the good man continued in public, and in the family, and in private, to pray fervently for his safe return. About this time I arrived in the Island, and found my old friend engaged in this pious work, at which he continued for a month or six weeks longer, after the owners had given the vessel entirely up for lost. The widow had put on mourning, and not a single person in the harbour believed the vessel safe, or one of the crew alive, except Mr. Jones, who never ceased his earnest intercession at a throne of grace for him. One Sunday morning I took the liberty to ask him, if he did not think it improper, if not presumptious, to pray for a man, who, in all probability, was safe in glory? "He'll get there soon," replied he, "I make no doubt; but I cannot believe he is there yet." That forenoon in his concluding prayer, he renewed with great fervour the usual request for his christian brother, and just as the congregation were coming out of the meeting which stands on the brow of the hill, the vessel was espied entering the harbour, known by the signal she made. The joy expressed by the pious pastor and his flock, at this sight, can better be conceived than expressed. When we had learned that all were safe on board, and were come into the house, Mr. Jones said to me, "Did not I tell you he was alive? I knew it by a sure token that never once deceived me; my soul was so drawn out in prayer, and enjoyed such unusual liberty while addressing a throne of grace in his behalf, that it was impossible for me to cease praying." The vessel, it seems, was dismasted in the storm, and drove into an unfrequented river in Nova Scotia, where they were long detained for want of proper hands to make a new mast; and having no communication of any kind with Halifax, they had no possible means of informing their friends of their distressed situation.— *Evan. Mag.* 1801.

Mention has been made, in the first volume of this Memoir, of strong impressions on Mr. Bramwell's mind, amounting to the possession of "a gift which nearly resembled *the discerning of spirits*." And some observations are added in that place, which tend to shew, that it is not a thing impossible with God occasionally to admit "men eminent for piety" into the *arcana* of some of his providential counsels, and especially into such as have relation to the welfare of his Church and the salvation of individuals. But no exhortation is there given, to believers in general, to attain to such an intimacy, or to expect the communication of 'those secret things which belong unto the Lord our God;' while many inducements are held out to all who 'have faith in God' to go on to perfection, to the attainment of holiness of heart and life,—which are some of these scriptural blessings, 'those things which are revealed, and which belong unto us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.' (Deut. xxix. 29.) In making such a marked distinction, the writer was influenced by the sentiment, which is thus finely expressed by St. Paul, (1 Cor. xiv. 12.) 'Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.'—The whole of the Apostle's reasoning in that chapter, demands the serious consecration of every Christian. The PROPHESYING of which the Apostle speaks, is evidently not to be understood as relating to the gift of foretelling future events; but it bears that particular meaning which is expressed in the first volume of this Memoir, and which may be more accurately explained as "an attempt to edify the Church by doctrinal and experimental exhortations." In comparing this Divine gift with that of tongues, he proves the superiority of the former, and shews that the latter, though more rare and extraordinary in its occurrance, was not so useful in its operation. He then adds, 'But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all,' &c. The same observation forcibly applies to the difference between the gift of *prophesying*, and that of *the discernment of spirits*, and of powerful mental impressions.

But while it is necessary to guard this doctrine against abuse, the following extracts will prove that this and other gifts, though of extraordinary occurrence, have not ceased in the Church of Christ, but are sometimes imparted to favoured souls, by Him who 'giveth not account of any of his matters,' and who has deputed none of his short-sighted creatures to set bounds to his Omnipotence, or to limit him who is the Holy One of Israel, in those displays which he may be pleased to make of his beneficence or his power. Some of these accounts are given by men who have never yet been suspected of enthusiasm.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS.

After this I went to a village, and many people accompanied me. As I was sitting in a house full of people, declaring the word of life unto them, I cast mine eye upon a woman, and discerned an unclean spirit in her. I was moved of the Lord to speak sharply to her, and told her, she was under the influence of an unclean spirit. Whereupon the woman went out of the room. I being a stranger there, and knowing nothing of the woman outwardly, the people wondered, and told me afterwards, I had discovered a great thing: for all the country looked upon her to be a wicked person. The Lord had given me a spirit of discerning by which I many times saw the states and conditions of people, and could try their spirits. There came also another time a woman, and stood at a distance from me. I cast mine eye upon her and said, "Thou hast been an harlot;" for I perfectly saw the condition and life of the woman. She answered, Many could tell her of her outward sins, but none could tell her of her inward. I told her, her heart was not right before the Lord; and that from the inward came the outward. This woman was afterwards convinced of God's truth, and became a friend.

GEORGE FOX'S *Journal*, *p.* 99.

JUDGE HALE'S TESTIMONY TO THE INWARD DIRECTION OF GOD'S SPIRIT.

They who truly fear God, have a secret guidance from a higher wisdom than what is barely human,—namely, the spirit of truth and goodness, which does really, though secretly, prevent and direct them. Any man that sincerely and truly fears Almighty God, and calls and relies upon him for his guidance and direction, has it as really as a son has the counsel and direction of his father: and though the voice be not audible, nor discernible by sense, yet it is equally as real as if a man heard a voice saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.'

Though this secret direction of Almighty God is principally seen in matters relating to the good of the soul; yet, even in the concerns of this life, a good man fearing God, and begging his direction, will very often, if not at all times, find it. I can call my own experience to witness, that even in the temporal affairs of my whole life, I have never been disappointed of the best direction, when I have, in humility and sincerity, implored it.

The observance of the secret admonition of this Spirit of God in the heart, is an effectual means to cleanse and sanctify us; and the more it is attended to, the more it will be conversant with our souls, for our instruction. In the midst of difficulties it will be our counsellor, in the midst of temptations it will be our strength and grace sufficient for us, in the midst of trouble it will be our light and our comfort.

It is impossible for us to enjoy the influence of this Good Spirit, till we are deeply sensible of our own emptiness and nothingness, and our minds are thereby brought down and laid in the dust. The Spirit of Christ is indeed a humbling spirit, and the more we have of it, the more we shall be humbled: and it is a sign that either we have it not, or that it is yet overpowered by our corruptions, if our heart be still haughty.

Attend, therefore, to the secret persuasions and dissuasions of the Spirit of God, and beware of quenching or grieving it. This wind that blows where it lists, if shut out or resisted, may never breathe upon us again, but leave us to be hardened in our sins. If observed and obeyed, it will, on all occasions, be our monitor and director. When we go out, it will lead us; when we sleep, it will keep us; and when we awake, it will talk with us.

IMPRESSIONS AND PROVIDENTIAL DELIVERANCES.

While humbled in himself, he (the Rev. Cornelius Winter,) had a holy confidence in God that never forsook him. His faith was often tried; especially in the early periods of his ministry. But though he was sometimes left almost destitute, and there seemed no probability of relief, he was always enabled to believe in the promise, 'Verily thou shalt be fed.' And he had many instances of God's seasonable goodness to encourage him in his future dependence upon him: and by means of these, he strengthened the minds of others. Loose among his manuscripts, I very accidentally discerned a narrow slip of paper thus written: — "A. Dyer returns Mr. Winter her thanks for the books: as he may choose to increase his library, she begs to have the pleasure of contributing a trifle towards it." What the sum was, is not mentioned; but on the corner of the paper he had written, — "I received this when I was exceedingly straitened, and I leave it with my papers as one testimony, among many, of the providential regard the Lord hath vouchsafed me. Reader, make him your confidence, and he will make you his care. July, 1776."

In 1789, his benefactor, the never-forgotten Mr. Thornton, wrote to him.

"*Dear and Reverend Sir,*— I inclose you £20, as I suppose your purse may be low. I commend you to the grace and love of Jesus. May he long shine upon you and bless you!

"My dear friend, yours affectionately,

"J. THORNTON."

On the corner of this, opposite the name of him who, unsolicited, had often supplied him, he wrote, — "I keep this letter to record the mercy of the Lord. It was a time when I received it wherein I was destitute, and knew not where to look for supply; I was kept from fear and anxi-

ety, and found the great advantage of faith. Bless the Lord, Oh my soul!"

I feel that I tread on delicate ground, when I remark, that my dear and honoured friend frequently indulged a confidence arising from *impression*. There never was a man more free from enthusiasm, if we use that term as significant of an unwarrantable dependence upon God, or an expectation of the end without the use of the means. He pressed duty in all its relations; he was sober-minded, cautious, and prudent; yet it is certain that in some of the most eventful circumstances of his life, his decision resulted very much at the time from a forcible impulse of mind which he could not feel himself at liberty to resist; and which indeed was fully satisfactory to himself. It is equally certain, that in taking these steps, he had no reason to repent; but was abundantly convinced by the consequences, that they were of God. We must not limit the holy One of Israel, nor yet be wise above what is written. 'A good man's steps are ordered by the Lord;' and he has said, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.' The promise is connected with the duty; and as the one is performed, the other is accomplished. Common Christians can hardly understand the peculiar advantages that arise from exalted spirituality of mind, and the most intimate degrees of devotedness and communion with God.

JAY'S *Life of Winter.*

CONVERSION.

After this I went again to Mansfield, where was a great meeting of professors and people, where I was moved to pray; and the Lord's power was so great, that the house seemed to be shaken. When I had done, some of the professors said, "It was now as in the days of the Apostles, when the house was shaken where they were."

GEORGE FOX'S *Journal. p.* 14.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Mr. Bramwell's fears respecting Methodism. — Remarks from various Authors on the subject of Preaching.

Some persons have thought that Mr. Bramwell's views of the Methodists were too gloomy, and others that his fears concerning them were ideal and visionary. It is acknowledged, that correctly to ascertain the state of any religious community is the proper work of Him alone who says, 'I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins.' Nevertheless, as the tree is known by its fruits, it is probable, that, in ordinary cases, a minister who regularly visits his flock, and conscientiously discharges the whole of his pastoral duty, may form a tolerable correct opinion of them. The following extracts will show, that the views of Mr. Wesley and of some of the early preachers upon this subject, were as gloomy as those entertained by Mr. Bramwell. Indeed, considering the depravity of human nature, and the tranquillity and repose which the Methodists have long enjoyed, their criminal approximation towards the world, will be rather a subject of regret than of surprise. It is presumed, therefore, that those who endeavour to sound the alarm to the Society, who 'lift up their voices like a trumpet and show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins,' ought not to be regarded as the enemies, but as the best friends of Methodism.

MR. WESLEY.

In the fine sermons, entitled *The Wisdom of God's Counsels*, from Romans xi. 33, after some able observations on the deceitfulness of riches, and the deep inroads which affluence too frequently makes on those who were pious, while in a state of poverty, Mr. Wesley introduces the following searching interrogatories.

Do you contract no intimacy with worldly men? Do you not converse with them more then duty requires? Are you in no danger of pride? Of thinking yourself better than your poor, dirty neighbours? Do you never resent, yea, revenge an affront? Do you never render evil for evil? Do not you give way to indolence or love of ease? Do you deny yourself, and take up your cross daily? Do you constantly rise as early as you did once? Why not? Is not your soul as precious now as it was then? How often do you fast? Is not this *your* duty as much as that of a daily labourer? But if you are wanting in this, or any other respect, who will tell you of it? Who dares tell you the plain truth, but those who neither hope nor fear any thing from you? And if any venture to deal plainly with you, how hard is it for you to bear it! Are

not you far less susceptible of reproof, far less advisable than when you were poor? It is well if you can bear reproof even from *me*. And in a few days you will see me no more.

He then adds:

Lord! I have warned them: but if they will not be warned, what can I do more? I can only "give them up unto their own hearts' lusts, and let them follow their own imaginations!"

By not taking this warning, it is certain many of the Methodists are already fallen. Many are falling at this very time. And there is great reason to apprehend, that many more will fall, most of whom will rise no more!

But what method may it be hoped the All-wise God will take, to repair the decay of his work? If he do not remove the candlestick from this people, and raise up another people, who will be more faithful to his grace, it is probable he will proceed in the same manner as he has done in time past. And this has hitherto been his method: When any of the old preachers left their first love, lost their simplicity and zeal, and, departed from the work, he raised up young men, who are what they were, and sent them into the harvest in their place. The same he has done, when he was pleased to remove any of his faithful laborers into Abraham's bosom. So when Henry Millard, Edward Dunstone, John Manners, Thomas Walsh, or others, rested from their labours, he raised up other young men from time to time willing and able to perform the same service. It is highly probable, he will take the same method for the time to come. The place of those preachers who either die in the Lord, or lose the Spiritual life which God had given them, he will supply by others that are alive to God, and desire only to spend and be spent for him.

Hear ye this, all ye preachers, who have not the same life, the same communion with God, the same zeal for his cause, the same burning love to souls, that you had once! "Take heed unto yourselves, that ye lose not the things ye have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward." Beware lest God swear in his wrath, that ye shall bear his standard no more! Lest he be provoked to take the word of his grace utterly out of your mouth! Be assured, the Lord hath no need of you; his work doth not depend upon your help. As he is able "out of stones, to raise up children to Abraham," so he is able out of the same to raise up preachers after his own heart! O make haste! Remember from whence you are fallen; and repent and do the first works!

Would it not provoke the Lord of the harvest, to lay you altogether aside, if you *despised* the labourers he had raised up, merely because of their *youth*? This was commonly done to us, when *we* were first sent out, between forty and fifty years ago. Old, wise men asked, "What will these *young* heads do?" So the then Bishop of London in particu-

lar. But shall we adopt their language? God forbid! Shall we teach him, whom he shall send? whom he shall employ in his own work? Are we then the *men*, and shall *wisdom die with us?* Does the work of God hang upon us? O humble yourselves before God, lest he pluck you away and there be none to deliver!

Let us next consider what method has the wisdom of God taken for these five and forty years, when thousands of *the people*, that once ran well, one after another, "drew back to predition?" Why, as fast as any of the poor were overwhelmed with worldly care, so that the seed they had received became unfruitful: and as fast as any of the rich drew back unto perdition by giving way to the love of the world, to foolish and hurtful desires, or to any other of those innumerable temptations, which are inseparable from riches: God has constantly, from time to time, raised up men, endued with the spirit which they had lost. Yea, and generally this change has been made, with considerable advantage. For the last were, not only, (for the most part) more numerous than the first, but more watchful, profiting by their example: more spiritual more heavenly minded: more zealous, more alive to God, and more dead to all things here below.

In the pamphlet entitled THOUGHTS ON METHODISM, Mr. Wesley says,

I am not afraid, that the people called Methodists, should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid, lest they should only exist as a dead Sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the Doctrine, Spirit, and Discipline with which they first set out.

After describing the origin and rise of the Methodists as a people, he says,

From this short sketch of Methodism (so called) any man of understanding may easily discern, that it is only plain, scriptural religion, guarded by a few prudential regulations. The essence of it is holiness of heart and life: the circumstantials all point to this. And as long as they are joined together in the people called Methodists, no weapon formed against them shall prosper. But if even the circumstantial parts are despised, the essential will soon be lost. And if ever the essential parts should evaporate, what remains will be dung and dross.

It nearly concerns us to understand how the case stands with us at present. I fear, wherever riches have increased (exceeding few are the exceptions) the essence of religion, the mind that was in Christ, has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality. And these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches.

How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, the religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay-tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal: consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionably increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away.

Is there no way to prevent this? This continual declension of pure religion? We ought not to forbid people to be diligent and frugal; we *must* exhort all Christians, to gain all they can, and to save all they can that is, in effect, to grow rich! What way then (I ask again) can we take, that our money may not sink us to the uttermost hell? There is one way, and there is no other under heaven. If those who *gain all they can*, and *save all they can*, will likewise *give all they can*, then the more they gain, the more they will grow in grace, and the more treasure they will lay up in heaven.

Mr. John Holdsworth, an aged preacher in our Connexion, has favored me with the following extract of a letter which Mr. Wesley addressed to Mr. Alexander Mather, and which has been copied *verbatim* from the original autograph.

"No, Aleck,* no! The danger of ruin to Methodism does not lie here.† It springs from a quite different quarter. Our preachers (many of them,) are fallen. They are not spiritual. They are not alive to God. They are soft, enervated, fearful of shame, toil, hardship. They have not the spirit which God gave to T. Lee, at Paitley-Bridge, or to you at Bolton. Give we one hundred preachers, who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, (such are Mr. Smith and Mr. C——,) and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon earth.

"I am your affectionate friend and brother,

J. Wesley."

MR. PAWSON.

In the year 1798, Mr. Pawson published and distributed among his brethren a small pamphlet, entitled, *a serious and affectionate Address to the junior Preachers in the Methodist Connection.* A few extracts from it will shew what were then Mr. Pawson's views of Methodism. And will any one pretend that we have, since that period, increased in spirituality?

* "Aleck," was the name by which Mr. Wesley familiarly addressed the late Mr. Alexander Mather, to whom the letter, with several others in the same packet, had been written.

† This was but the fragment of a letter; the former part has been torn off

As the Lord hath so wonderfully appeared in our behalf when we were in the greatest danger of "falling out by the way," and consequently of separating one from another; having led us, (one and all) to pursue healing measures; so that there is good reason to believe that we are more firmly united to each other, than ever. In order that this happy union may continue, and that the work of the Lord may prosper among us, suffer one who sincerely *loves* you, and who most devoutly wishes to live and die in the closest connection with you, to endeavour to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, respecting a few particulars which appear to me of great importance.

Ever since the death of our honoured Father in the Gospel, (whose memory must be for ever dear to every one of us,) these words have been much upon my mind, "The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the Elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel," Judges, ii. 7.

Speaking of the early preachers, he says,

Having been divinely enlightened, and effectually awakened by the power of the Holy Spirit, and made clearly to see, and sensibly to feel their sinful, guilty, helpless, and ruined state, as fallen creatures; they were constrained to flee for refuge to the only Saviour of lost and undone sinners, and by a lively faith in him, obtained redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins, and the happy fruit thereof. They well knew the truth of that word of God, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Hence, having received this Holy Spirit in his sanctifying influences, they were of the same humble, meek, gentle, and patient mind with their Lord and Master; and copied his example.

They learned from the Word and the Spirit of God, how deeply depraved, how crooked and perverse the will of man naturally is. And on the other hand, that the will of God is holy, just and good. By the power of the Holy Ghost they were enabled to renounce their own will, and to embrace the will of God, at all times and on all occasions. They had received the wisdom which is from above, which is pure, peaceable, and easy to be intreated. Hence they were simple of heart. They were willing to be taught both of God and man, sincerely desirous to receive instruction from every quarter.

They well knew that sin has depraved the powers and faculties of the human soul, that the mind as well as the conscience is defiled thereby: But that divine grace restores us both to the favour and to the image of God. They therefore witnessed a complete deliverance from the bondage of sin and corruption, being made free from the power of every evil temper, every unholy desire, and every vile affection; so being wholly devoted to God, they lived in his Spirit, and enjoyed communion with him.

Has the grace of God taken that deep root in our hearts, that we constantly maintain the Christian spirit and temper? May it be said of each of us, —

"Claim, thou ever art within,
"All unruffled, all serene?"

Have we constant power over our own spirit and natural temper, which Christian Ministers ought to have? Do all the fruits of the Spirit live and grow in us? Have we put on the ornament of an humble, meek, gentle, mild, quiet and patient spirit? We shall certainly have sufficient occasion for the exercise of all these graces, as we shall meet with trials from different quarters; and those, perhaps, will come the closest, which we shall meet with from our own people. They may too often form a wrong judgment of us, and on that account, not treat us with that tenderness, respect, and love, which they ought. We need not wonder, *if, on some occasions,* "their lips should become as spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." Yet at the same time, they know very well, what manner of spirit we ought to be of. And however justly we may blame them, for their conduct towards us, yet if they discover any bad temper in us, any thing that looks like anger or pride, or vanity, or high-mindedness, we shall not only lessen ourselves in their esteem, and of consequence hinder our own usefulness; but also lay a sad stumbling-block in their way.

"Thou who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" Should we not in preaching to others, — constantly keep ourselves in view? If then we teach others to devote themselves wholly to God, and to live in his presence, ought not we ourselves to do the same? If we shew the people the necessity of being deeply serious, spiritual, and heavenly minded, should we not endeavour to set them the example? Surely we ought to have our own salvation as much at heart, as that of the people. In our conversation with them, are we not sometimes too light and trifling? Should we not endeavour to preach out of the pulpit, as well as in it? Should we not burn in the love of God, and shine in the light of God, wherever we go, endeavouring to make the people wiser and better? Should not our whole spirit and tempers, as well as our words and actions, shew that we walk with God? If from the pulpit we shew the people how holy and happy the Lord, by the power of his grace, will make them; should we not at all times so live, as to satisfy them that we believe what we say, and that we ourselves are followning after this very thing? I know that some will say, "When the people invite us to their houses, we then unbend our minds a little, and it is to us a time of relaxation." I cannot help thinking, that it would be far better never to visit the people at all, than that they should hear any thing light or trifling, foolish or vain, from a preacher. We are exhorted by an Apostle, "to lay aside all foolish talking and jesting. To let no corrupt [illegible] or

stinking] conversation proceed out of our mouth, but such only as is good to the use of edifying." My dear brethren, I cannot help expressing my fears, that too many of us have almost lost sight of that solidity of spirit, of that gravity and sober mindedness, for which our predecessors were so remarkable. It is not unlikely but some may say, "Such a one is an exceeding agreeable companion; his cheerful and facetious conversation is very entertaining; his ready wit and lively satirical turn of mind is quite agreeable." But what good fruit did you ever know to spring from such seed? I fear none at all. And will not others who are better acquainted with the nature of religion say, "It is a pity that such men should ever come out of the pulpit, but that they should live and die there."

I am fully satisfied, (I speak it with the deepest concern,) that considered as a body, there is a sad decay of spiritual-mindness, of serious godliness, among, us. The good Lord restore it speedily!

If we teach the people the necessity of seeing the hand of God in all the events of his providence, and to be wholly resigned to his will on all occasions; — and if we assure them, That all things work together for good to them that love God; — will they not be surprised if they should see us on a variety of occasions, as deeply affected as if we did not believe one word of this? If we are as soon offended, as soon made fretful and impatient as other people, — what then in the name of God has divine grace done for us? If it has not wrought a real change in our heart, if it has not given us the victory over our own spirit and temper, I confess, I am at a loss to say what it has done! And yet it is truly distressing to think, how astonishingly impatient of contradiction some of those who profess faith in Christ are: and how extremely difficult it is to mention any thing disagreeable, or any thing which we think to be really wrong to an individual, but he will be more or less offended!

Ought not we, as well as the people, to possess our souls in patience? To bear our crosses and trials with resignation to the divine will? To make a sanctified use of whatsoever may befal us, well knowing that the permissive hand of an infinitely wise and gracious God is in every event of his providence, however painful it may be, and that nothing can befal us by chance, seeing that "the hairs of our head are numbered?"

Many of the preachers are my seniors in every sense of the word at their feet I shall account myself happy to sit in the House of our Father above. Others are my equals, and have no need to be reminded of these things by me: But there are not a few who are much younger than I am, and it is for your sakes that I now write. It gives unspeakable satisfaction to me and to many others, to see any of you deeply pious, truly devoted to God, and influenced by the same spirit by which those who have gone before you were governed: and as the whole weight of

this great work in which we are all engaged, must rest with you, when it shall please God to call us hence, let it be your daily care and constant endeavour to prepare for that day. Acquaint yourselves with the whole economy of Methodism; enter into the very spirit of our doctrine and discipline; and labour fully to understand all the affairs of our connection.

Some, it is well known, have acquired a good degree of what is commonly called learning. If they have at the same time acquired a good degree of useful knowledge, it is well; such knowledge, I mean, as tends to make them more useful in the hand of God, considered as Christian Ministers: but for my own part, I cannot help thinking that if some preachers had taken half the pains in reading good English authors, which they have expended in attempting to learn the languages, they would have been both wiser, and much more useful in the church than they are. I fear that some are in no small danger of losing their way, by endeavouring to gratify an unbounded curiosity, in a variety of ways which have nothing to do with saving souls. I would wish all such to consider, whether they can answer to God, to their own consciences, or to the people, for thus spending either their time or their money! Do the people support us and our families for any such purpose? I think not. Are not such men in great danger of substituting what they call learning, in the room of divine teaching and the influence of the Holy Ghost? Excuse me, my brethren, if I express my fears, lest we should be succeeded by a different description of men, than the primitive Methodist preachers were. Be it so, that they are more learned, will they have more of the mind of Christ, and of the power of the Holy Ghost attending their ministry? I pray God they may.

You must acknowledge, that considered as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is your bounden duty to make all your studies subservient to his glory in the salvation of precious souls. Can you then, my brethren, with a good conscience, follow after that sort of knowledge which an Apostle says *puffeth up*, or that has a direct tendency to increase pride? He tells us, that the Great Head of the Church sent him to preach the Gospel, "not with the wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect;" and observes, "that we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God. Which things also we preach, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Will any man, who seriously considers these words, go to the writings of a Shakspeare, (how entertaining soever they may be) in order to learn to preach the gospel of Christ! He may perhaps learn how to amuse his hearers, and to please a certain description of persons, but I think there is little ground to hope that he will edify them much. If any preacher thinks it right to read books of this

sort, then he cannot blame his hearers for doing so too; and by the same rule he may think it right to attend the play-house; as no doubt but he whose taste is so far vitiated, that he can enter into the spirit of such entertainments, would be abundantly more delighted by seeing them acted upon the stage,—as there every thing, I presume; is set forth to the very life.

Is it then to be expected that we shall find out a more excellent way of preaching the gospel, than that which the Apostle recommends? I think not. And we shall always find, that those preach the gospel the most affectually, who have the highest degree of the power and presence of the Lord with them;—who go forth in the strength of the Lord God, burning with holy zeal for his glory, and shining in the light of divine truth; or who being so fully enlightened by the Holy Spirit, are enabled to set the truth in its clearest light, that all who hear may be edified.

Much hath been said in the praise of human learning; and it must be acknowledged that it has its use, when it is suffered to stand in the place where God appointed it. But is not its greatest use for a minister that of enabling him to understand the sacred scriptures in the original language? And if so may not many preachers save themselves a great deal of trouble, who can hardly hope to qualify themselves for that work, in an higher degree than those ministers were who translated the Bible? But if they could even do this, may they not enter into other men's labors, and read the works of the wisest and most learned writers that this nation was ever blest with, who have written both critically, practically, and experimentally upon the scriptures?

But after all, it is not criticising upon scripture words and phrases; it is not making nice distinctions and curious observations upon the word of God, that will prove the most effectual way of bringing souls to Christ and building them up in him.

By erecting schools and endowing colleges, in order to qualify young men for the work of the ministry, by giving them a good stock of human learning, and by this means taking the matter out of the hands of Christ, and endeavouring to make ministers for him, in the room of his making them for himself, which he always did, and always will do,—have they not ruined religion, root and branch?

Let us then, my brethren, seek for divine teaching; and with this view, read only such books as we can ask a blessing from the Lord upon; so that the light of God shining upon our minds while we read, we may be brought nearer to him, and consequently be the better qualified to do his work.

I think none of you are so far gone, but you would be ashamed to be seen, by any of our people, reading a play. But remember, whether they see you or not, the Lord sees you; and I am inclined to think would no be well pleased with you. "For every idle or useless word," saith our

Lord, "that a man shall speak, he shall give an account in the day of judgment." An awful consideration indeed! And shall we not also give an account of every idle word that we write? And if so, will it be straining the matter too far to say, we must give an account for what we read?

In the minutes printed in the year 1763, our venerable father said, "Personal religion, either towards God or men, is amazingly superficial among us. How little faith is there, how little communion with God; how little living in heaven, walking in eternity, and deadness to every creature?" He then asks, "Why we are not wholly devoted to God, breathing the spirit of Missionaries?" And concludes with exhorting us to stir up the gift of God that is in us, and to double our diligence.

Little need be said respecting the first Methodist preachers having honour in view, as it is well known, that very little else but the deepest reproach and contempt were every where plenteously poured forth upon them, and that many of them had to endure persecution in its various forms, being most cruelly treated by the beasts of the people; and often in no small danger of loosing life itself. But how great is the mercy of God to us! We are strangely at ease in this respect, and suffer nothing or next to nothing, merely on a religious account. We enjoy many and great privileges, with few crosses and trials. If it should be said, "But we go to rest at night many a time weary and faint enough, through the labours of the past day." Be it so. Let us bless God that we have a bed to lie down upon. Our Master had not where to lay his head. Let us rejoice that he has accounted us worthy to weary our bodies in his blessed work. Besides, if I am not mistaken, most of us laboured as hard, and wearied our bodies as much, before we commenced travelling preachers, as ever we have done since: and let us remember too, that thousands of our people work hard, and weary themselves full as much as we do.

We must acknowledge, that we are highly favoured of God; let us not then abuse his manifold and great mercies. If he hath given us rest and peace on all sides, let us not settle upon our lees and be at ease in Zion: but let us labour so much the more cheerfully and faithfully, and improve this season of tranquillity which the Lord hath graciously given us, for the building up of his Church.

If the men of the world smile upon us, let us take care that we do not drink into their spirit, or copy their example; "Be not conformed to this world," is the advice of an inspired Apostle: and speaking of himself, he says, "I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me." We may be well assured, that the world can afford us no higher degree of happiness than it afforded the Apostle; and beyond a doubt, it is as much our duty and interest to be crucified to it, as for St. Paul himself. "Do not affect the gentleman," was the advice that our hon-

oured father gave us long ago, and we ought never to forget it. For a preacher of the gospel to follow the foolish fashions of the men of the world in dress, appears to me to betray a weakness and littleness of mind of which we ought to be ashamed. That conformity to the world, is breaking in upon our people with a full tide, cannot be denied. Surely then no preacher should give it the least countenance; but on the contrary, bear a pointed testimony against it in all its forms. Time was, when a Methodist might be known by his dress, as well as by his serious and devout behaviour; but this is far from being the case now. It is much to be lamented, that many of our people do not differ at all from the rest of the world in this respect, but run into all the changeable fashions of the times, however foolish, or expensive; and I fear that some of our preachers see no evil in this, but rather encourage it. Our venerable father saw with sorrow of heart this deadly evil increasing among us, and he bore a faithful testimony against it even to the last. But after all he could say or do, this evil has abundantly increased in every part of the Connection. What can we expect the rising generation to be, if we suffer those to go unreproved who so openly break the rules of the Society? And supposing parents do not run into this evil themselves, yet how many there are, who can see no harm in suffering their children, especially their daughters, to run headlong into all the fooleries of the most fantastical dress? Dress that is so far from rendering their persons more comely or pleasing in any respect, that it certainly deforms those who wear it, in the highest degree. But we may carry this matter father still. O tell it not in Gath! There are Methodist parents who are so far from seeing any harm, that they plead for the necessity of teaching their children dancing, and think it right to take them to places of public diversion! When I think of these things my soul mourns before the Lord, and I cannot but fear lest the "glory should be departing from us."

In preaching the word of God, we are in continual danger of losing sight of ourselves, and so directing our discourses to the people, as if we thought it only necessary, that they should follow our advice, and be wholly devoted to God. But surely we ought to have as great a regard for our own souls as for the souls of the people; and we must believe, at least, it is as necessary that we should be wholly given up to God, as it can be for them to be so.

Many who hear us, will on a variety of occasions be apt to say, "Physician, heal thyself." To instance in a few particulars: A preacher exhorts the people to a diligent attendance upon all the ordinances of God, and he shews them how impossible it is that they should prosper in the divine life if they neglect any of them: Yet at the same time they never see his face in the house of God; but when he preaches himself, let him have what opportunities he will. A preacher shews the people

now deeply serious, how attentive to the voice of God, how watchful, spiritual, and heavenly, every one should be while engaged in public worship: But when he himself is not employed in conducting that worship, the people see him undevout, inattentive, and so far from appearing to desire to profit by any thing that is delivered from the pulpit, that he is only making remarks upon those parts of the sermon which may appear to him weak or low, or not suited to his (perhaps) vitiated taste. A preacher endeavors to convince his hearers, how necessary it is for them to live in the presence of God at all times; to be serious, spiritual and heavenly minded; and that as we frequently pray, that God would bring us into this holy and happy state of mind, we ourselves ought to be workers together with God, and should endeavor to be so. But the people see that he himself is only spiritual while in the pulpit, and that in general, when he is out of it, he can be as light and trifling as those whom he so warmly reproved for being regardless of the presence of God while he was preaching. Let no one say, "Why do you thus expose the preachers?" I answer, If no such evils as these have any place among us, then the people cannot see what does not exist! But if any of us are found guilty in the above particulars, let us humble ourselves before the Lord, and speedily reform what is amiss. I hope none of us are so far gone yet, as only to wish that the people may be right in every thing. No brethren, in this respect, let our charity begin at home, lest we should have it to say, "They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept."

Nothing is more easy, than for a preacher of any considerable ministerial abilities, to form a wrong judgment of the state of his own mind, with respect to his experience in the divine life. Such is the goodness of God that according to his promise, "Lo I am with you always even to the end of the world," while we are delivering the word of truth in his name, we are favored with clear and enlarged views of the mercy and love of God in Christ Jesus, divine light flows in upon us, and we see inexpressible beauty in the word of God, and such loveliness in the religion of the holy Jesus, as we cannot fully express. A great variety of new thoughts arise in our minds, which the Lord enables us to clothe in agreeable language, and to deliver to the people with peculiar pleasure. As we see the beauty, so we feel the vast importance of spiritual and heavenly things, and are sensibly touched with the inexpressible value of immortal souls. Our hearts are enlarged, and we feel ourselves at full liberty to declare to the people the whole counsel of God. Now this is certainly an unspeakable blessing,— a blessing for which we have infinite cause to praise the Lord.

But if we are not brought nearer to God, and if we do not endeavour to retain those divine sensations, so as to be made more spiritual and

heavenly-minded by them, may we not justly conclude, that all this is given to us *merely* for the sake of the people, in order that they may be profited by our ministry, and is no solid proof that we are alive to God? If we are only "men of another spirit" while in the pulpit, but like other people when out of it, our hearts are not right in the sight of the Lord.*

It nearly concerns us to endeavor to render the worship of God as spiritual as possible, so that the divine ordinances may be wells of salvation, and rendered as profitable to us, and the people, as the Lord designed they should: so that the power of godliness may be preserved among us, and pure and undefiled religion flourish in our Connection. In order to this, how closely should we walk with God! How earnestly should we wrestle with him in prayer, for the aid of his Spirit, and for his blessing upon our labours! How should we labour to conduct every part of the worship of God, so as to render the whole truly spiritual, and to encourage the people heartily to engage in every part of it; in singing the praises of God; in serious and solemn prayer; and in attentively hearing the word of life! Formality in religion has slain its thousands, and we can never be too much upon our guard against so great an evil, which would rob us and our people of every thing valuable, and only leave us the shadow of good things behind. Every thing dull, slow, heavy, and wearisome, in the service of God, should be carefully avoided: and we should go through the whole with that holy fervour of spirit, in that hearty and zealous manner which becomes the servants of so great and good a Master.

Crosses and trials we certainly shall have from various quarters: And who is without them? The wicked themselves, the rich and great, nay, even the right honourable among men have their share of them. At present perhaps we have as few, and as easy trials as any other description of men upon earth. But supposing that our trials were more or greater, we well know that whatever the Lord may call us either to do or suffer, he will give us strength according to our day. When therefore we preach to the people entire resignation to the will of God, recommending patience under the cross, and shew them how to make a

* Remember the case of poor unhappy Thomas Williams, who having delivered from the pulpit a lively heart-searching sermon, was told by one who well knew his life and conversation, as soon as he came down, "Why, Mr. Williams, you do not believe one word of what you delivered." He replied, "Indeed I do, I seriously believe that I have delivered the very truth according to the Scriptures. For when I am in the pulpit God gives me another spirit; but when I come out of it, I am the same man that I was before." A very awful consideration, enough to make the best of us tremble! Well might the man of God pray, "Examine me, and prove me, O Lord, try my reins and my heart!"

sanctified use of every affliction, let us take care that nothing contrary to this appear in ourselves, lest we should lead any of them to think that we do not believe our own doctrine.

Religion in the present age has suffered not a little for want of being properly understood. It has been painted in very dismal colours, and represented as a gloomy melancholy thing. And some ministers have laboured more abundantly to find out, with how small a measure of grace a person may possibly get to heaven, than to discover in how high a degree the Lord designs to save us. But we have been taught that religion is like its glorious Author, Christ Jesus; — that it is altogether lovely, every way calculated to make us both holy and happy; and therefore it must be our highest wisdom to pursue it with the utmost diligence.

As it is one considerable part of our work to comfort the people of God, to be helpers of their joy; can we do this more effectually than by opening in the clearest manner the precious promises of the gospel, especially those which discover a free and full salvation? And as we believe that salvation, in all its degrees, is of grace, and not of works, and that therefore it must be obtained by faith, is it not highly necessary to enforce that word of God, '*Behold now is the day of Salvation*,' upon all those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness? But can we do this with a good grace except we ourselves have experienced the gospel blessing in its fulness, or are earnestly seeking this pearl of great price? When we were admitted into full Connection we were required to answer the following questions: "Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be perfected in love in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and to his work?" Ought we not to retain a lively remembrance of these things all the days of our life? And can we be clear in the sight of God, if we are not endeavouring to embrace every promise which we explain to, and enforce upon the people; so that we may not only be ministers, but witnesses of the whole truth of God? How happy for us, when we can say upon good ground, "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you;" — "We have believed, and therefore we speak;" and setting our seal to the whole truth, declare to all, with the Apostle, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live, in the body, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me!"

Surely it concerns us above all other men in the world, to spend all our time, strength, and talents, for the glory of God, and the good of his people; and for this very end, to live in the enjoyment of constant communion with him, to walk in the light of his countenance, to drink deep into his Spirit, yea, to be filled with the fulness of God; so shall we resemble those happy men who have gone before us.

Ten thousand weapons have been formed against us from the beginning, and we have had all sorts of enemies to contend with, but the Lord hath always appeared for us. And at this day we may bid defiance to men or devils to hurt us, if we ourselves do not put it into their power. Let us then go forward in the strength of the Lord God, and in a little time we also shall finish our course upon earth and enter into our Master's joy, and with our fathers and brethren who have gone before us, be completely and eternally happy in the full enjoyment of our God.

Mr. Joseph Benson.

In the account published by the friends to whom the late venerable Mr. Benson's papers were left in trust, the following statement occurs:

Sunday, Jan. 28. He made as great an effort as his weakness would allow, to converse with his friends Mr. and Mrs. Bulmer, who called to see him, and spoke very feelingly of the rapidity with which his strength had declined. It being observed to him that it was cause for thankfulness, that when he enjoyed his strength he had employed it to a good purpose, he said, "It was indeed a ground of great satisfaction to him that he had uniformly endeavoured to promote the glory of God and the good of souls; and, though it was not on the ground of his confidence, 'for,' said he, 'by grace we are saved,' yet he felt comfort from the consciousness that from the commencement of his ministry, although sensible of many infirmities and imperfections, he had never been influenced by any sinister or private motive; had it been otherwise, he should have felt very uneasy now. "He expressed his solicitude for the prosperity of the work of God in the Methodist Connection, and said he thought there was danger chiefly from three sources,— the love of *riches*, the love of *honour*, the love of *power*. He hoped the preachers would be *very tender* of the cause of God, and that they would seek nothing but the good of souls.

Remarks on Preaching.

Having recorded at some length the fears which the early preachers entertained of the future prospects of Methodism, we now proceed to shew, by a few appropriate extracts, the views of several famous divines respecting a lively ministry, and how well those views were embodied in Mr. Bramwell's practice, as may be seen in the preceding part of this Memoir.

Luther's views on preaching.

We ought to direct ourselves in preaching according to the condition of the hearers. But most preachers commonly fail herein; they preach that which little edifieth the poor simple people. Bucer and Zuinglius at Marpurg preached in all-state and curious manner, there-

by to bear the bell, as if they would say, "Luther and Melancthon! behold, what learned fellows we are!" To preach plain and simple, is a great art; Christ himself preacheth of tilling ground, of mustard seed, &c. &c. He used altogether mean and simple similitudes.

LUTHER'S *Table Talk*, p. 259.

St. Paul never used such high and stately words as Demosthenes and Cicero did; but he spake (properly and plainly) words which signified and shewed high and stately matters. He did well in not speaking so trim and finically; otherwise every man would speak wondrous highly.

Idem, p. 260.

When I am in the pulpit then I resolve to preach only to men and maid-servants. I would not make a step into the pulpit for the sakes of Philip Meclancthon, Justus Jones, or the whole university; for they are well seen in scripture already. But when preachers will direct their sermons to the high, learned and deep understanding, and will breathe out altogether Rabbonies and master-pieces, then the poor unlearned people present do stand like a flock of kine.—*Idem*, p 260.

Cursed are all preachers that in the church aim at high, hard, and neat things, and (neglecting the saving health of the poor, unlearned people,) seek their own honour and praise, therewith to please one or two ambitious persons.—*Idem*, p. 266.

I esteem those to be the best preachers, which teach the common people and youth most plainly and simply, without subtilty, screwed words, or enlargements. Christ taught the people by plain and simple parables.—*Idem*, p. 17.

Luther preached at Dresden before the Prince Elector, and Prince of Anhault, and other Princes, out of the first of Tim. chap. i. which sermon afterwards was printed. Philip Melancthon, being then present, demanded of Luther, if he had comprehended in his memory every point of that sermon before he preached it? "For (said he) it was a most excellent exhortation to the highest service of God, namely, the hearing of God's word. Can they, in Popedom, find in their hearts daily to hear mass? Wherefore then should not we much rather long and strive to perform daily this true service of God, from whence floweth the greatest good? Behold the preface before that sermon." Thereupon Luther answered and said, "I use not to collect and foster every point in particular, but only the chief heads on which the contents of the whole sermon depended, as, namely, in this sermon I directed the exhortation to the chief service of God; as the hearing of his word. Afterwards, in speaking, such things came into my mind, of which before I never thought; for if I should comprehend every word which I deliver, and in particular should speak of every point, then I should not so briefly run through."—*Idem*, p. 254.

Mr. Thomas Walsh's exemplary conduct.

What was said of Mr. Walsh may with great propriety be said of Mr. Bramwell:

He was in truth a mighty adversary to the devil's kingdom, and took every possible step which he judged might in any measure promote the honour of God, to whose sole glory he sacrificed himself with all his labours and studies. It is scarcely possible to enable a stranger to him, adequately to conceive the flow of his soul, and the energy of his spirit and expressions on those occasions, while he endeavoured by all means to save some. To this end he truly imparted, not the gospel of God only, but likewise his own soul, withholding nothing which he judged might be beneficial to the people. It was this noble object of persuit which raised him likewise above even the necessary attention to his body. It was truly said of him,

"He scorn'd his feble flesh to spare'
Regardless of its swift decline;
His single aim, his ceaseless prayer,
To spread the righteousness divine.

"He truly triumphed in the Cross,
Its prints as on his body shewed,
Lavish of life for Jesus' cause,
Whose blood for all so freely flowed."

The fire which burned in his heart never said, "It is enough." And the success with which it pleased our Lord to prosper his labours, was a constant motive to his still going forward. His designs of doing good were without limits, esteeming himself in this respect a debtor to all, and embracing in affection not less than the whole world.

He did whatsoever he did, for God, with all his might, spending his very life in every action, even as if he should merit heaven thereby, and yet at the same time heartily despising and rating himself as an unprofitable sarvant.

In short, as one truly born from above, his soul had a vehement tendency towards heaven, whither he would fain bring the whole world. His heart and treasure being there, this world with all its furniture, its idle pomp and fading joys were as nothing to him; being dead and crucified with Christ; with zeal for whose glory he was, as it were, eaten up continually.

Mr. Richard Baxter's views on preaching.

In his Reformed Pastor, this excellent Divine observes:

As Austin says, "A preacher must labour to be heard understandingly, willingly, and obediently; and let him not doubt but he will effect this more by pious prayers than by the power of oratory; so that by

praying for himself and others whom he is about to address, he may be a petitioner before he is a teacher: and at the very time when he is coming, before he goes out let him raise his voice to God, and lift his soul with fervent desire." Prayer must carry on our work, as well as preaching. He does not preach heartily to his people who does not pray for them. If we do not prevail with God to give them repentance and faith, we are not likely to prevail with them to repent and believe. Paul gives us frequently his example of praying night and day for his hearers. When our own hearts are out of order, and theirs too, if we do not prevail with God to mend and help them, we are likely to be very unsuccessful in our work. To speak coldly and slightly of heavenly things, is much *the same* as to say nothing of them.

Of all preaching in the world that speaks not absolute falsehood, I hate that preaching which tends to make the hearers laugh, or to move their minds with levity, and affect them as stage plays do, instead of affecting them with a holy reverence of the name of God. Jerome, in his epistle to Nepotian, says, "When you are teaching in the church, let not a shout be excited in the people, but a groan. The tears of your hearers will tend to your praise."

We should, as it were, suppose we saw the throne of God, and millions of glorious angels attending him, that we might be awed with his majesty when we draw near to him in holy things, lest we profane them, and take his name in vain.

It is a kind of contempt of great things, especially things so great, to speak of them without great affection and fervency; the manner as well as the words must set them forth. If we are commanded 'whatever our hand finds to do, to do it with all our might;' then certainly such a work as preaching for men's salvation should be done with all our might. But, alas, how few, how thin are such men! Here one, and there one, even among good ministers, that have an earnest, persuading working way, so that the people can feel him preach when they hear him.

If your hearts be not set on the end of your labours, and you long not to see the conversion and edification of your hearers, and do not study and preach in hope, you are not likely to see much fruit of it. It is an ill sign of a false, self-seeking heart, that can be content to be still doing and see no fruit of their labour. So I have observed that God seldom blesses any man's work so much as his whose heart is set upon success.

No wise or charitable physician is content to be still giving physic and see no amendment among his patients, but have them all to die upon his hand; nor will any wise and honest schoolmaster be content to be still teaching though his scholars profit not; but either of them would grow weary of the employment.

I confess, for my part, I marvel at some ancient and reverend men, who have lived twenty, forty, or fifty years, with an unprofitable people, where they have seen so little fruit of their labours, that it was scarcely discernible, how they can with so much patience still go on! Were it my case, though I durst not leave the vineyard, nor quit my calling, yet I should suspect that it was God's will I should go somewhere else, and another take my place who might be fitter for them; and I should not be easily satisfied to spend my days in such a manner.

I seldom come out of the pulpit but my conscience smites me, that I have been no more serious and fervent. It accuses me not so much for want of human ornaments or elegancy, nor for letting fall an uncouth word; but it asks, me, "How couldst thou speak of life and death with such an heart? How couldst thou preach of heaven and hell in such a careless, sleepy manner? Shouldst thou not weep over such a people, and should not thy tears interrupt thy words? Shouldst not thou cry aloud, and shew them their transgressions, and entreat and beseech them as for life and death?" Truly this is the peal that conscience rings in my ears, and yet my drowsy soul is not fully awakened!

DR. WATTS VIEWS OF PREACHING.

Watch and pray much, and converse much with God, as one of his ministering angels in flesh and blood, and grow daily in conformity to God and to your blessed Saviour, who is the first minister of his Father's Kingdom, and the fairest image of his person.

Luther used to say, that he got more knowledge in a short time by prayer sometimes, than by the study and labour of many hours.

Endeavour to get your heart into a temper of divine love, zealous for the laws of God, affected with the grace of Christ, and compassionate for the souls of men. Speak as a dying preacher to dying hearers, with the "utmost compassion to the ignorant," the tempted, the foolish, and the obstinate; for all these are in danger of eternal death. Attend your work with a most fervent and enlarged desire to save souls from hell, and enlarge the kingdom of Christ your Lord. Go into the public assembly with a design (if it please God) to strike and persuade some souls there to repentance, faith, holiness, and salvation. Go "to open blind eyes, to unstop deaf ears, to make the lame walk," to make the foolish wise, "to raise those who are dead in trespasses and sins" to a heavenly and divine life, and to bring guilty rebels to the love and obedience of their Maker, by Jesus Christ the great Reconciler, that they may be pardoned, sanctified and eternally saved.

Be very solicitous about the success of all your labours in the pulpit. Water the seed sown not only with public, but also secret prayer. Plead with God importunately, that he would not suffer you to labour in vain. Be not like that foolish bird the "Ostrich, which lays her eggs in the

dust, and leaves them there, regardless whether they come to life or not; God hath not given her understanding." Labour, and watch, and pray, that your sermons, and the fruit of your studies, may become words of divine life to souls.

REV. WM. DELL'S VIEWS OF PREACHING.

In the excellent sermons by the Rev. Wm. Dell, published in London in 1652, and reprinted in 1709, the author says:

Christ always gives unto all those whom he sends forth and employs, of his own power, for his own works; heavenly power for heavenly works, spiritual power for spiritual works, the power of God to do the works of God. Indeed Christ gives unto some a greater measure of power, and to some a lesser, according as he intends to use some in greater works and difficulties, and some in lesser; but still they have of Christ's power, whether more or less, who are employed by Christ; and a little of that power that is communicated by Christ, will enable a man to do great things, far greater than the world suspects or imagines.

'He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do, and greater works than these, because I go to the father.' Where Christ saith, a believer shall not only do the same works with himself, (which also had been a great thing!) but also greater works than himself; and this indeed is altogether admirable and wonderful, that a believer shall do greater works than Christ.' But how is this made good? Why thus: Christ overcame the law, and sin, and death, and hell, and the whole power of the devil, in a body and soul free from sin, his human nature being the immediate formation of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and so had not the least spot of sin in it. But now, believers overcome the same evils, even the law, sin, death, hell and the whole power of the devil, in corrupted and polluted nature, in bodies and souls, at the first, full of sin, and afterwards defiled through many corruptions. The devil came to Christ and found nothing in him; and so he overcame; but he comes to a believer and finds much in him, and yet he overcomes. This truly is a greater work than Christ did; and these works we do, yet not through our own power, but through Christ's, of which we truly partake through faith.

The use of this subject is, in the first place, to exhort all men, every where to partake of this supernatural, spiritual and divine power of the Holy Spirit, which is certainly communicated to all the faithful and elect in Christ Jesus. And let no man think it is a thing indifferent, whether he have this power or not; but let him know, that the having of this power of the Spirit is of absolute necessity, and that both for ministers and all other Christians. There is a necessity of this power of the Holy Spirit for ministers, and to them this present place doth chiefly relate.

For, First, if they have not this power of the Holy Spirit, they have no power at all. For Christ sent them, only as his Father sent him: and so Christ never gave unto them any earthly or human or secular power, no power of swords or prisons, no power of outward constraint or violence. Christ gave them no such outward and worldly power, for the enlargement of his kingdom, as not being at all suitable to it. For his kingdom is spiritual, and what can carnal power do in a spiritual kingdom? His kingdom is heavenly, and what can earthly power do in a heavenly kingdom? His kingdom is not of this world, and what can worldly power do, in a kingdom that is not of the world? And though Antichrist and his ministers have arrogated and usurped such a carnal and earthly and worldly power to themselves, in their pretended managing the kingdom of Christ, yet the faithful ministers of Christ cannot.

And therefore seeing the ministers of the gospel have no power from beneath, they must needs have power from on high; seeing they have no fleshly power, they must needs have spiritual power; seeing they have no power from earth and from men, they must needs have power from heaven and from God; that is, the power of the Holy Spirit coming on them, or else they have no power at all.

Secondly. The ministers of the gospel must needs have the power of the Holy Spirit, because otherwise they are not sufficient for the ministry: For no man is sufficient for the work of the ministry, by any natural parts and abilities of his own, nor yet by any acquired parts of human learning and knowledge, but only by this power of the Holy Spirit; and till he be endowed with this, notwithstanding all his other accomplishments, he is altogether insufficient. And therefore the very Apostles were to keep silence, till they were endued with this power; they were to wait at Jerusalem, till they had received the promise of the Spirit, and not to preach till then. Yea, Christ himself did not betake himself to the work of the ministry, till first the spirit of God came upon him, and annointed him to preach. And therefore for thirty years together, he did not preach publicly and ordinarily till at John's baptism he received this power of the Spirit coming on him. Now if Christ himself and his Apostles were not sufficient for the ministry, till they had received this power from on high, no more are any other ministers whatsoever. So that whoever is destitute of the spirit of power, is insufficient for the work of the ministry, and that in these regards:

1. Without this power of the Spirit, ministers are utterly unable to preach the word, that is, the true spiritual and living word of God.—For to preach this word of God, requires the power of God. One may speak the word of man by the power of man, but he cannot speak the word of God, but by the power of God. And Christ himself, in all his ministry, spake nothing of himself, in the strength of his human nature; but he spake all that he spake, by the power of God; and without this

power of God, he could not have spoken one word of God. And so in like manner, no man is able to preach Christ, but by the Holy Spirit which is the power of God. For Christ is the power of God, and can never be represented but by the Holy Spirit, which is the power of God, And Christ, who is the power of God, can never be made known to the church, but by the ministration of the Spirit, which is the power of God. So that it is not an easy thing to preach Christ the power of God; yea, none can do it aright, but by the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon him.

2. Without this power of the Spirit, ministers are unable to preach the word powerfully. They may, it may be, happen upon the outward word, yet there is no power in their ministry, till they have received this power of the Spirit coming upon them. Otherwise their ministry is cold, and there is no heat in it; it is weak and there is no strength in it.

(1.) *It is cold and there is no heat in it.* — Without men have received the power of the Spirit, there is no fire in their preaching. Their ministry is unlike the ministry of Elias, whose ministry was a fire; and unlike John Baptist's, who in his ministry was a burning and a shining light; and unlike Christ's, whose ministry made the disciples' hearts burn within them; and unlike the Apostle's, who, having received this Spirit, were as men made all of fire, running through the world, and burning it up. Without this Spirit a man's ministry is cold, it warms the hearts of none, it inflames the spirit of none, but leaves men still frozen in their sins.

(2.) *It is weak and hath no might in it.*—There is no strength in a ministry where there is no Spirit. Whereas when men have received the Spirit, then their ministry is a powerful ministry, as Paul says, 1 Thess. i. 5. 'The gospel came to you, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost;' and therefore in power, because in the Holy Spirit. And again, 1 Cor. ii. 4. 'My speech and preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power.' Where you see the Spirit and power in the work of the ministry, they are always conjoined, as the sun and light are; and that ministry that is in the Spirit, is always in power. And being in power, it is always effectual, either to convert men, or to enrage them; and the enraging of men, is as evident a sign of the Spirit of power in a man's ministry, as the conversion of men.

MR. THOMAS TAYLOR'S DESIRE TO SEE FRUIT.

After spending a seccond year at Keighley, I removed to Wednesbury, in Staffordshire where I had the less hopes of doing good, because my predecessor had done all that I could do in any respect. The societies were dull, and the congregations miserably small; so that small

were the hopes of doing much good. My very soul sunk within me, so that at times it seemed as if I must faint. I cannot tell how they get their time over who can drag on and see no fruit. Were that my case, I should be ready to conclude that I was out of my place.

I found Cork was not as I had left it, about four years ago. Then every thing appeared lively. Now, alas, all was dull and languid; the prayer-meetings were dropped, discipline was not kept up, and the society was much decayed. I laboured with my might to revive the former flame; but how hard is it to gain the ground which is lost! This has often been a discouragement to me; that whatever steps I have taken to revive the work of God, few of my successors will continue to tread in the same. Either indifferency, or not seeing things in the same light, envy having had too great an influence, has often hindered the good work of God.

CHAPTER XXV.

The nature of a Revival of Religion.—A Defence of the work of God.—Proofs that God has not confined himself to any of those modes of operation which the wisdom of man has frequently wished to suggest to Omniscience.

The following extracts from a discourse delivered by the Rev. Thomas Scott, late Rector of Aston Sandford, Bucks, are in such exact accordance with the sentiments of Mr. Bramwell, and point out the nature of a Revival of Religion in such a scriptural manner, that their introduction in this place will be an authoritative corroboration of Mr. Bramwell's action in the Church of Christ. May it not also be hoped that it will excite in others a strong disire, even in these particulars, 'to be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises? Both Mr. Scott and Mr. Bramwell thought that ministers ought to aim' at the achievement of great things; and that when they were endued with power from on high, their labours would be signally owned of God, any many, yea great numbers would be converted to the faith.

Nothing would satisfy Mr. Bramwell but the conversion of sinners and to effect this, he thought it right to use every means which Christian prudence could devise. Like a skilful fisherman, he frequently varied his baits, and changed his plans; in short, he not only exerted all his *own* energies, but gladly availed himself of the pious and zealous co-operation of others.—He seemed to wish to put into active and efficient operation every part of the gospel machine, in order to produce the most potent effects.

Mr. Scott's conceptions of a minister 'coming in the fulness of the

blessing of the gospel,' will be readily understood from the following passages:

"It means, in general, that not only one or two obtain a blessing from his ministry, but that large numbers receive the blessing, 'yea the fulness of the blessing of the gospel.' When Peter first preached the gospel of repentance and remission of sins, he went amongst the murderers of Christ in the fullness of this blessing. Three thousand were converted in one day; soon they became five thousand; and soon ten thousand believed and 'continued stedfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and were of one heart and soul, and great grace was upon them all.'

"From these instances, you may see what I mean by a minister 'coming in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.' It is when hundreds are brought to repentance, faith and newness of life, when all that appear converted, or almost all, (for a few even in the primitive church were deceivers,) are of one heart and soul, and live in holy communion, and forget their worldly habits and connexions, and impart to each other, and walk in the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and maintain an upright, cheerful, thankful, benevolent, heavenly mind and conversation; when the Lord adds to the church daily such as shall be saved; when some are sent forth as ministers and missionaries to the heathen lands; when new churches are founded; when at home and abroad truth kindles like a fire and spreads from heart to heart, from family to family, from neighborhood to neighborhood, from country to country; when the word of the Lord 'runs and is glorified;' when the gospel is 'preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.'

"Thus it was in the primitive times with Peter, Paul and all the Apostles. The 'fishers of men' cast a wide net and took large shoals of fishes. Now the case is altered; we only catch a single fish now and then. But it was not merely in the primitive times, but in various ages and in different parts of the Christian church since, there have been revivals of religion and great things have been done. In the days of St. Augustine, and at the blessed Reformation, this was the case. In the time of Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Wesley also, great numbers were truly converted, whatever errors were mixed with their proceedings. Whenever things like these are seen, whenever numbers are brought to fear God, and repent and love Christ and live holy lives, then the gospel is preached in the fulness of blessing.

"But these are blessings which our fathers have told us — we have scarcely ever seen them ourselves. I have been thirty-eight years a fisher of men, and not quite unsuccessful; but I never yet saw any of this fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Our profession, indeed, is such, that the least success in it is better than the greatest in

any other. One soul brought to salvation is worth more than all the glories of the world. If but a single sinner repents, there is joy in heaven,— the only event on earth that we know of, that occasions that joy. If a man were to labor thirty-eight years, and gain but one soul, he might consider himself as greatly honored. Still, who that loves his Savior and has compassion for the souls of men, would not long for more enlarged success? I would thank God for even a single soul enlightened and pardoned and sanctified; but yet, if all my parish were converted, and there were only one left in its sins, I would have a struggle with the devil for that one. There are in the present day an increasing number of gospel ministers, and by all some good is done; and in a course of years we get together a little circle of converts. But such success as I mean by the fulness of the blessing, has not been vouchsafed to any of us in these days. I am not speaking of the comparative success which one minister may have above another, but the success of all of us put together, would be but little compared with that of Paul or Peter."

He next inquires into the reason of this:

"What can be the reason of this? Is the Lord's arm shortened that it cannst save? Is the gospel another thing than it was once? Are we to say that we cannot work miracles? Miracles never converted men, except as the grace of God wrought with them. There cannot be a greater mistake than to think that miracles can change the heart. It is the ordinary grace of the Holy Spirit which produces that change. It was this that converted Saul into Paul."

His suggestions on the probable causes of the decline of religion, and on the methods best calculated to revive it, are the most important parts of the discourse:

"We may inquire whether our modern preachers of the gospel do so prominently hold out the peculiarities of Christianity, as the Apostles did; whether they come with the holy law of God as the ministration of condemnation in one hand, and the gospel of Christ as the ministration of life in the other; whether they warn sinners, like John Baptist, not to trust in any outward forms, and then point out to them the Lamb of God.

"It is the work of the Spirit to glorify Christ. May we not then ask, whether God the Spirit is glorified in his person and grace, in his love and power in the work of conversion; whether we do not hold the doctrine of the Holy Spirit slightly? For if we do not honor the Spirit, how can we expect that he will honor our ministry? We must expect all success from his power alone. If a man trust in knowledge, talents, eloquence, human suasion, he will do nothing. It is our business indeed to do all we can in inviting, entreating and instructing men

but when we have done all, it is the Spirit of God who alone can quicken the dead and enlighten the blind; and if we depend not on Him, we shall not, we cannot, succeed.

"We do not *expect* this fulness of blessing, and are *satisfied without it.* There is a littleness in our faith and conception of things. We do not ask, nor expect this fulness, we have no idea of it, it does not enter our minds. Can we wonder, then, that the Lord says to us, 'According to thy faith be it unto thee?' But the Apostles went forth and expected and asked a fulness of blessing. When a man is in earnest, nothing will satisfy him but this. Others may be satisfied without success. They may go through a formal set of observances, and be contented; instead of examining their ministry and their whole conduct, and saying, 'Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.' If we can be satisfied without this enlarged blessing, certainly we shall never have it. If a man says, 'I have a large attentive congregation; I have a good income; the people are obliging, my circumstances are comfortable,' he is in a most dangerous state. It is the same as if a fisherman should be satisfied because he has a good net and plesant companions and fair weather, though he comes home empty. If any thing but usefulness will satisfy us, I do not wonder we are not useful. We must thank God for this and that thing; but nothing must satisfy us but the conversion of sinners.

"Our faithfulness and earnestness are more in the *pulpit* than in the *closet.* We preach Christ as if in earnest, and we go and pray as if not in earnest. There is but little wrestling with God for a blessing. There is a want of the spirit of prayer.

"There is a want of that holy, heavenly temper, and that general circumspection of conduct, which would make us patterns of good works. Our example may not be dishonourable; but is it so honourable to the gospel as it might be? Our example is not a scandal; but can we say with the Apostle, 'I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel?' Can we say, 'Ye know how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believed?' Do we embody Christianity? do we not only put a copy before others and leave them to write, but take the pen and show them how to form each letter? Are we men of God; heavenly, disinterested, dead to the pleasures, interests, and honours of this world? What would Paul say, if he were to come amongst us? Would he not have reason to say, 'All seek their own, none the things that are Jesus Christ's.' Are we not fishers of *ease, fame, money,* rather than fishers of *men?*"

A DEFENCE OF REVIVALS.

As Mr. Bramwell was not only the firm advocate of Revivals, but one of the most successful agents employed by the Great Head of the

Church, it may not be improper to say a few words on this subject, in order to remove prejudice and to promote the harmony and welfare of those persons who ought to feel unmixed pleasure on hearing of the increase of the Redeemer's kingdom. By the term "REVIVALS" is here meant, the gracious outpourings of the Spirit of God, by which sinners are converted, believers quickened, and the work of God generally enlarged.

These effects are sometimes produced by means the most simple, and to human reason often the most unlikely. It has not unfrequently happened that revivals have been attended with loud cries and much apparent confusion. Many persons in great distress have literally roared out for the disquietude of their hearts, and, in some cases, there have been several persons softly exhorting the penitents to believe, whilst one has been praying aloud for the whole congregation. Those who do not enter heartily into such a work, are often offended at these extraordinary circumstances; some say, 'There is too much noise,' whilst others assert, 'It is all confusion.' Similar observations have been made when a number of persons assemble for commercial purposes, in some place of public resort,—as at the Stock Exchange in London. An inexperienced spectator coming from a distant part of the country, might at first suppose the noisy concourse to be quite distracted, and incapable of rational intercourse; but, on a closer and more minute inspection, he would find every one so intent on pursuing his own separate business and interest, as not to feel interrupted by those around him. In like manner, during a revival, each person in a crowded meeting may mourn or rejoice apart; and each may be interrogated, instructed, exhorted, comforted, &c., as distinctly as if alone. To the Almighty, it is certain, this can be no confusion; for thousands, nay, millions of persons are frequently presenting their petitions to him at the same moment, in all that variety of thought and expression which their separate and often widely differing exigencies require: Yet the Lord hears them all,—and enters minutely into the almost infinite variety of their circumstances and feelings; and, when they offer up their lawful petitions to him in sincerity and in faith, he has pledged himself to answer all of them. To Jehovah, therefore, the extraordinary circumstances of a revival may appear delightful order and harmonious regularity.

The circumstantials of a revival were comparatively disregarded by Mr. Bramwell. If sinners were saved, the *mode* appeared to him to be of little importance. His enquiries were not, 'Was it a *noisy*, or a *silent* meeting?' but, 'Were sinners awakened and converted? were believers, quickened, sanctified, and strengthened?' And an answer in the affirmative excited his pious and grateful feelings, and often caused him rapturously to exclaim, 'Glory be to God! Praise the Lord!'

Mr. Bramwell knew that man was not a mere machine, but a rational

being, endowed with the greatest sensibility. Were a person who had committed an awful crime, to be suddenly arrested; were his guilt brought home to his conscience by some messenger of justice, in the pointed language of Holy Writ, '*Thou art the man;*' it would be perfectly natural for the culprit to turn pale, to falter in his speech, to tremble, and to present every symptom of real agony and distress. When Belshazzar, the proud Assyrian monarch, saw the appearance of a man's hand, writing upon the plaster of the wall of his palace, 'his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.' And these effects have never yet been deemed unnatural. 'Why then,' it might be asked, 'should it be thought strange, to behold sinners who having been powerfully awakened by the Spirit of God, — who are so deeply convinced of the enormity of their crimes as to apprehend they are every moment in danger of dropping into the burning lake, — who imagine that 'hell is moved from beneath to meet them at their coming,'— why should it be thought unnatural for such persons to discover outward symptoms of the alarming distress and agitation felt within?' Were a man to seem totally unconcerned at the apprehension of the most imminent dangers, it would, in the opinion of all, except those who have been tutored in the school of frigid infidelity or stoical apathy, be deemed almost a conclusive proof, if not of insanity, yet, at least, of that vacancy of mind or destitution of intellect which is generally regarded a pitiable misfortune.

After having carefully perused the sacred scriptures, Mr. Bramwell had remarked, that the Divine Influence, when in powerful operation, frequently affected the subjects of it in such a manner, as to agitate every part of the body, and constrain them to cry out, 'What must I do to be saved?' And he could no where discover any intimation that the Almighty would ever cease to produce such effects; on the contrary, when he read the encouraging predictions of Holy Writ, in reference to the conversion of the Gentiles and the restoration of the Jews, he indulged the pleasing hope, that, previous to the auspicious era, which might be very properly designated 'THE GOLDEN AGE,' the Lord would favour the world with still more extraordinary effusions of the Holy Spirit, so that 'a nation will be born at once.'

Neither could he perceive that the Lord had ever *prescribed* the fixed manner, by which alone he would effect the salvation of man, and from which, at no time and on no occasion, would he ever deviate. Entertaining these views, it was Mr. Bramwell's opinion, that it was his duty, not merely as a Christian, but as a rational being, to bow to the fiat of Jehovah, and on these as well as other occasions, to say, 'Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done!' When a poor, weak, ignorant, and sinful mortal, ventured to dispute the mode of Divine operation, or to reject

every thing which did not exactly accord with his preconceived (and often erroneous) views of the works of God, Mr. Bramwell thought such a person betrayed an assumption of arrogance, at which he was ready to shudder with horror. For he had read the following and similar passages of Holy Writ, and they obtained from him entire credence: 'For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the Scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 1 Cor. i. 17,—21. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.' 1 Cor. ii. 14.

He had himself felt the powerful effects of the Spirit of God, operating in a manner very similar to that which often appears in revivals. He had likewise seen numerous instances of sinners saved at those "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' who afterwards gave the most indisputable evidence of a real change of heart;—for they walked in the ordinances and commandments of God blameless, they persevered to the end of their Christian race, and died in the pleasing anticipation of that fulness of joy which is in the presence of God, and of those pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore. Of the reality of the change, and of the divinity of the agent which produce such glorious effects, Mr. Bramwell could neither rationally nor scripturally entertain a doubt; and he left it for sceptics and unbelievers to shew, who, besides Jehovah, 'can bring a clean thing out of an unclean.' The change to him was clear and manifest: he beheld the finger of God in it, and to God alone he always ascribed the glory.

But to do justice to the whole of Mr. Bramwell's conduct during a revival, it may be proper here to state, that, however hopeful professed converts might appear, nothing would satisfy him but a real and visible change. Fruits he always demanded: and in forming a judgment of believers, he most rigidly adhered to that declaration of our Saviour, 'by their fruits ye shall know them.' Whatever individuals might assert respecting their awakenings, and the peculiar spiritual manifestations with which they were favoured, he invariably required practical demonstration of the reality of the work. On this point, perhaps no one was more tenacious than Mr. Bramwell; and, however harsh may have been the thoughts of some men concerning his active and enterprising conduct in revivals, they are exceedingly erroneous; as it is believed that no minister ever more studiously avoided religious enthusiasm, in the

distorted sense of that much abused word. As one proof of this, it may be mentioned to Mr. Bramwell's praise, that however highly he regarded the strong and undisguised cries of real penitents when in distress, seconded as they generally were by the fervent *Amens* of believers in their behalf, and however lovely in his eyes their countenances appeared when suffused with the tears of genuine contrition, he always disapproved of noise without power, whether proceeding from persons labouring under conviction, or from others who were not so affected.—The sounds which proceeded from an awakened sinner when he felt himself 'deep-wounded by the Spirit's sword,' although dolorous in their nature, were sounds most exhilarating to Mr. Bramwell's heart, and they excited at once effusions of gratitude to God, and feelings of heavenly commiseration for the mourner. The fine and experienced ear of his Master in Israel, could as readily detect a false noise and forced clamor, as his quick and piercing eye could discern false fire when it made its first appearance, and arose from sparks of its own kindling.

Having done an act of justice to Mr. Bramwell's character in this particular, we now proceed to show, by extracts from various Divines, that noise and apparent disorder are not unfrequently the accompaniments of a revival, and that a revival under such circumstances is no new thing in the earth. Our first extracts shall be from that valuable and unassuming body of Church History, the *Historical Collections* of the late Dr. GILLIES.

As an appropriate introduction to these extracts, we prefix the following

ARGUMENTS IN DEFENCE OF REVIVALS,

From Dr. GILLIES's *Historical Collections*, *Vol.* 2, *p.* 233.

1. That it is not reasonable to conclude, persons to be under the influences of the Holy Spirit *merely because they cry aloud*, &c.

2. Nor is it reasonable, to conclude persons are not under the influences of the Holy Spirit, *merely because they cry aloud*, &c.

3. Much less is it reasonable for any to argue, that men are not under the influences of the Holy Spirit, because *they do not cry aloud*, &c.

4. Nor is it reasonable to suspect person are not under Divine influence, *merely* because of some *real* or FANCIED irregularities. — Can we expect babes to be perfect?

5. If persons in great numbers, are, in their general course, turned from a careless to a religious conversation, &c., we must conclude that they are under the Divine influence, though they may be imprudent in some particulars.

6. In almost every revival of religion, there have been some extraordinary circumstances.

7. Whoever may be the instruments, and whatever the means used in this work, we ought to ascribe all the glory to God.

8. Whilst we endeavour to avoid every thing which might give just cause of offence, yet we should never shrink from known duty, and from our proper action in the work of God, through a fear of what may be said by individuals in the church or by the world.

9. If we do err, let it always be on the favourable side, in charity,) It is far better to be mistaken in *ten* instances than to offend *one* of Christ's little ones.

1. DR. GILLIES'S HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS.

This seems to have been a very extraordinary dispensation of Providence: God has in many respects gone out of and much beyond his usual and ordinary way. — The work in this town and some others about us, has been extraordinary, on acount of the universality of it affecting all sorts, sober and vicious, high and low, rich and poor, wise and unwise; it reached the most considerable families, and persons to all appearance as much as others. In former stirrings of this nature, the bulk of the young people have been greatly affected; but old men, and little children, have been so now. Many of the last have, of their own accord, formed themselves into religious societies, in different parts of the town; a loose, careless person could scarce find a companion in the whole neighbourhood; and if there was any one that remained senseless or unconcerned, it would be spoken of as a strange thing. — PRINCE'S *Christian History*.

Mr. Luke Short, who formerly lived under the ministry of Mr. John Flavel, but lately lived and died at Middleboroug, in New England, used to be often speaking, with great affection, of Mr. Flavel's powerful and successful preaching; and among other instances, he gave this; That one Lord's day, Mr. Flavel began his sermon, with an introduction of this importance,—"My dear hearers! you know I have long been endeavouring to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ in his amiable excellencies and all-sufficiency before you, that, if possible, you might be allured to love him; and I have used all the powerful arguments and motives I could think of to persuade you to come to him and heartily embrace him. And these winning methods, you know are most agreeable to my natural temper and disposition. And I desire to rejoice in the hope, that, through the grace of Christ, there are some among you who have been allured and persuaded to love and embrace Him. But alas! I have sufficient reason to fear, there are those among you, who have not yielded to all my alluring representations of him,—nor to all the cogent arguments and motives which I have been so long using, and so frequently and earnestly pressing upon you. But O! after all I can say or do, you will not love him! and now, alas! I must change my note! I must

deliver a message to you that I am loth to deliver. But my Lord and Master requires it of me, in order to deliver the whole counsel of God. It is that dreadful message in 1 Cor. xvi. 22, 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be ANATHEMA MARANATHA,' that is, 'Let him be accursed of God, till God shall come and judge him.' If any man, or any one,— whether male or female, high or low, rich or poor, old or young,— love not the Lord Jesus Christ above every thing in the world, let them, says the word and majesty of God, be *Anathema Maranatha*,— accursed of God, and the curse of God, until the Lord shall come and execute the fullness of his wrath upon them,"—or, words to this purpose. Upon which the whole assembly was struck into a very great and visible consternation; some deeply affected for themselves, and some for their children. And, among the rest, a gentleman of wealth and figure fell down as dead in his pew, though he revived in great distress of soul.— PRINCE'S *Christian History, No.* 29.

[See in the same auther, No. 29, a like instance under Mr. Doolittle's ministry, just before he pronounced the blessing at dismissing the congregation.]

I must here instance a very solemn and extraordinary out-letting of the Spirit, which about the year 1625, and afterwards, was in the west of Scotland. This by the profane rabble at that time was called *the Stewarton sickness*, for, in that parish first, (but after, through much of that country, particularly at Irvine, under the ministry of Mr. Dickson,) it was remarkable; where it can be said (which divers ministers and christians yet alive can witness,) that for a considerable time, few Sabbaths did pass, without some evidently converted, or some convincing proofs of the power of God accompanying his words; yet that many were so choaked and taken by the heart, that, through terror, (the spirit in such a measure convincing them of sin, in hearing of the word,) they have been made to fall over, and thus carried out of the church; who after proved most solid and lively Christians. And as it was known, some of the most gross, who used to mock at religion, being engaged upon the fame that went abroad of such things, to go to some of these parts, where the gospel was then most lively, have been effectually reached before their return, with a visible change following the same. And truly this great spring-tide (as I may call it) of the gospel, was not of a short time, but of some years' continuance; yea thus, like the spreading moorburn, the power of godliness did advance from one place to another, which put a marvellous lustre upon these parts of the country, the savour whereof brought many from other parts of the land to see the truth of the same.— *Fulfilling of the Scriptures.*

It was very affecting to Mr. Mahaw, and to all who were present, to see these poor naked sons of Adam, and slaves to the devil from the

birth, to come towards the Lord as they did, with their joints shaking and their bowels trembling; their spirits troubled, and their voices with much fervency uttering words of sore displeasure against sin and satan, which they had embraced from their childhood, with great delight. And now accounting it all their sin, that they had not the knowledge of God, that they had served the devil, the great enemy both of God and man, and had been so hurtful in their lives;—but yet being very thankful, that through the mercy of God, they had an opportunity to be delivered out of their dangerous condition. The Christian Indians rejoiced to see the Pawaws begin to turn from their wicked ways to the Lord; and in a little time after, on a lecture day, at the close of the exercise there were several more of the natives, who expressed their desire to become servants of the Most High God;—among whom was Tequanonim, another Pawaw of great esteem, and very notorious.

Appendix to Mr. Mahew's Indian Converts.

During the short time of Mr. John Tennant, his labours were greatly blessed, so that the place of public worship was usually crowded with people of all ranks; and they seemed to hear generally as for their lives; yea, such as were wont to go to those places for their diversion, (viz., to hear news, or speak to their tradesman, &c., even on the Lord's day, as they themselves have since confessed,) were taken in the gospel-net. A solemn awe of God's majesty possessed many, so that they behaved themselves as at his bar, while at his house. Many tears were usually shed when he preached: and sometimes the body of the congregation was moved, or affected. I can say, (and let the Lord alone have the glory of it!) that I have seen both minister and people, wet with their tears as with a bedewing rain. It was no uncommon thing to see persons, in the time of hearing, sobbing as if their hearts would break, but without any public outcry, and some have been carried out of the assembly (being overcome) as if they had been dead.

Religion was then the general subject of discourse, though they could not at all approve of the power of it; the holy bible was searched by the people on both sides of the question, and knowledge surprisingly increased. The terrors of God fell generally upon the people of this place: so that wickedness, as ashamed in a great measure, hid itself. Some of the jolly companions of both sexes, were constrained, by their consciences, to meet together, the men by themselves, and the women by themselves, to confess privately their abominations before God, and beg the pardon of them.—*Prince's Christian History.*

Wednesday, Nov. 3.—Got to Baskinridge, the place where Mr. Cross exercises his stated ministry. At the house where I waited in the way, a woman spoke to me, under strong convictions. In prayer I perceived my soul drawn out and stirring of affection among the people. I had not discoursed long, when the congregation melted into tears. This

abated for a few moments, till a little boy about seven or eight years of age, cried out exceeding piteously indeed, and wept as though his little heart would break. Mr. Cross, having compassion on him, took him up into the waggon, which so affected me, that I broke from my discourse, and told the people, "The little boy should preach to them, and that God, since old professors were not concerned, had displayed his sovereignty, and out of an infant's mouth was perfecting praise." God so blessed this, that an universal concern fell on the congregation again. At length I concluded, and as I was going away, I asked the little boy, "What he cried for?" He answered, "His sins." I then asked, "What he wanted?" He answered, "Christ." As I passed along, fresh instances of God's power presented themselves to my view. Many mourning after Jesus, that would not be comforted. After sermon, Mr. Cross gave notice, of an evening lecture in his barn, about two miles off. Thither we went, and a great multitude followed. Mr. Gilbert Tennant preached first, and that excellently well, upon the necessity and benefit of spiritual desertions. I then prayed and gave a word of exhortation. The Lord's presence attended it. One could scarcely sustain the discovery, that Jesus Christ made of himself to his soul. Others were so earnest for a discovery of the Lord to their souls, that their eager crying obliged me to stop, and I prayed over them, as I saw their agonies and distress increase. At length we sung a hymn and then retired to the house, where the man that received Christ, continued till near midnight, talking of and praising "his sweet Christ, his free-hearted Christ," &c. A gracious woman, who had been wrestling with God for a display of his power, was so overcome with a sense of goodness, that she almost swooned away. And at length my soul was so full that I retired, and wept before the Lord, under a deep sense of my vileness, and the sovereignty of God's everlasting love. Most of the people spent the remainder of the night in prayer and praises. Two or three young ministers spoke alternately, and others prayed as the Lord gave them utterance. It was a night much to be remembered! May the Lord make us mindfull of it to the day of our death! — *Mr. Whitfield's Journals.*

The Rev. Mr. Wheelock, of Lebanon, having preached at Norton, a considerable number, as I was informed, were awakened and pricked in their hearts under his preaching; some were constrained to cry out, because their convictions of sin and of their exposedness to the immediate and actual execution of the Divine anger were upon them and were so sudden and piercing. A far greater number, who seemed to be seriously concerned and distressed, did not manifest their distresses in such a public manner; whilst some perhaps were enquiring what these things meant. There was a word of exhortation given by a young candidate, after Mr. Wheelock was gone. Upon the whole, I do verily

believe, that this day was a day wherein God remarkably displayed his power and grace, in the assembly of his people here.

Prince's Christian History.

Mr. Wheelock was delivering his discourse very pleasantly and moderately; but oh, an increased power and authority accompanied it! a power and authority too big, awful and majestic for any creature; it was the voice of God, powful and full of majesty! Indeed he spake in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power; so that one must acknowledge God was with him of a truth! By and bye, some began to cry out both above and below in awful distress and anguish of soul; upon which he raised his voice that he might be heard above these outcries; but the distress and outcry spreading and increasing, his voice was at length so drowned, that he could not be heard.

Wherefore not being able to finish his sermon, with great apparent calmness and serenity of soul, (having mentioned it to me,) he called to the distressed, and desired them to gather themselves together in the body of seats below. This he did, that he might with more convenlency converse with them, counsel, direct, and exhort them, &c. Oh, how were sinners in Zion afraid! How did fearfulness surprise the hypocrites! Whilst they saw no way, how could they approach unto the holy and jealous God! Oh the distress and anguish of their souls! O the pains that were upon them, like as of a woman in travail; whilst they saw their just deserts, and the hand of the great God, whilst they knew not but that, (yea were awfully affraid lest) they must eternally dwell with devils and damned souls in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, and bear the fury of God, with whom, now they saw, was terrible majesty! Seeing somewhat of the awfulness of hell, and that they deserved it; seeing also that nothing but the mere uncovenanted good pleasure of God, who was very angry with them, kept them out of hell every moment: no wonder that they cried out, they should go to hell, they were going to hell. What shall we do to be saved? &c.

Idem.

Mr Crocker preached to a considerably larger assembly from Rom. viii. 1. Many among the assembly were deeply affected, groaning and sobbing; though not so as to disturb the people in, or hinder them from hearing, as I remember. After the exercise was concluded, the distress among the people appeared greater; many groaning or crying out, complaining of their sins and danger, of their blindness, hard-heartedness, &c.—and there was a great weeping and mourning. The whole assembly, old and young, seemed to be concerned in a greater or less degree, though indeed some were rejoicing in Christ in hopes of their interest in him, and also to see others in distress for their miserable and sinful state by nature; because of the reasons of it, and because they hoped

it would issue well. I prayed several times with the people, and exhorted them, &c. I conversed particularly with many young and old as they were brought to me. We tarried in the meeting house till nine of the clock, for what I know, and then retired. It was indeed a wonderful evening of the out-pouring of the Spirit, as a Spirit of grace and supplication unto his people.—*Idem.*

Mr Crocker remarks, "Those who I charitably hope have experienced a saving change among this people, have been generally very ignorant, and being but 'babes in Christ,' having but little experience in the spiritual and Divine life, having their affections much raised and inflamed, with a new glorious and ravishing view of spiritual and Divine things. No wonder that at first they might, (some of them at least,) be carried out too rashly and unseasonably to judge the interior state of others, who were not in their frames, or especially if they appeared lukewarm and indifferent in the present day, or to speak against these things. But further experience teaches them their absolute inequality for such an important work as infallibly to judge the interior state of others, and may and does so more and more. But some of their judging was only a judging those who were visibly irreligious, or unacquainted with the internal operations of the Spirit, arising from a love to their souls, though they may not always have acted with such wisdom herein as might be desired. But do you expect children to act like men?"—*Idem.*

In answer to objectors, Mr. Crocker observes, "To sum up all in a word,—there are many things reported of the subjects of this work, about their imprudencies, irregularities, &c., some of which are false or gross misrepresentations, or charging those things upon all, of which some pretended ones are guilty, or which may I think be accounted for, considering either that many appear friendly to this work who are unconverted, or that those who are converted are in a state of imperfection. But if persons will receive none as Christians, or as under a Divine influence, except such as those in whom they can see no fault, where will they find any Christians, in their esteem, then, upon earth? And now if after the account I have endeavored to give of the revival and progress of a work of God among this people, in the late day of his great grace, any reject it for a wild scene of enthusiasm, give me leave to ask, *What true religion is, and where we shall find it?* if true religion is not to be found in these things, where shall we find any religion, save the religion of nature? I freely confess, for my own part, that if these things are not *true religion*, I know not what it is either in theory or by experience." *Idem.*

Mr. Parsons in writing to Mr. Prince, relates the following: "While I was preaching from Psalm cxix. 59, 60, I observed many of the as-

sembly in tears, and heard many crying out in very great bitterness of soul, as it seemed then by the sound of voices. When sermon was over, I could better take notice of the cause; and the language was to this purpose, viz. 'Alas! I am undone; I am undone! O my sins! How they prey upon my vitals! What will become of me? How shall I escape the damnation of hell, who have spent away a golden opportunity under gospel-light, and variety?' and much more of the like import. It is true, outcries were new and surprising at that time; but knowing the terrors of the Lord, I was satisfied, that they were but what might be reasonably accounted for, if sinners were under a true sense of their sins, and the wrath of a sin-hating God: and therefore I, did not use any endeavors to restrain them at that time; but the greater the number that cried out of themselves and their vileness, the more I rejoiced in hope of a good issue. As I was satisfied that it was the truth they had been hearing, so, by their complaints it appeared to be the force of truth that made them cry out, and threw many of them into hysterick fits; and if I mistake not, every one that were so violently seized that night, have since given good evidence of their conversion."—*Idem.*

I find, by reading what accounts I kept by me of the blessed work of grace, which hath been in the towns, that there was much good done by *visiting*, by which I found out many that had been touched, of whom I had not known well how it was with them. But this visit gave me an opportunity to offer such things unto them as might tend to fix these beginnings in their souls, and to increase them. So likewise many were convinced of their lost state by nature. But particular examination of persons as to their state and condition, is an excellent mean to lay them open to conviction under the public word; and thus were some convinced in these towns. The Divine influence of the Spirit of God was very evidently with his word, though not in every opportunity, yet in several, until May 1740, in which time many more were added unto the Lord's people.

Some of these opportunities, for clearness' sake, I shall mention: One was in October 6th, 1739, in a night meeting; but the people not being warned with sufficient care, there met but about fifteen persons, eleven of whom were deeply convinced of their misery; and some of them cried out so very awfully, that I was constrained to conclude. After sermon, I took an opportunity to enquire of those persons, what was the real cause of their crying out in such a manner? Some of whom answered me, "That they saw hell opening before them, and themselves ready to fall into it." Others answered me, "That they were struck with such a sense of their sinfulness, that they were afraid the Lord would never have mercy on them."—*Extract of a letter from Mr. Rowland, minister at Hopewell, to Mr. Prince, minister at Boston.*

In the beginning of March, I took a journey into East Jersey, and was abroad for two or three Sabbaths: a neighbouring minister, who seemed to be earnest for the awakening and conversion of secure sinners, and whom I had obtained to preach a Sabbath to my people in my absence, preached to them, I think on the first Sabbath after I left home. The text was, Luke xiii. 7. 'Then said he to the dressers of his vineyard; Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' Under that sermon there was a visible appearance of much soul-concern among the hearers; so that some burst out with an audible noise into bitter crying. After I had come home, there came a young man to my house, under deep trouble about the state of his soul, whom I had looked upon as a pretty, light, merry sort of a youth. He told me that he was not any thing concerned about himself in the time of hearing the above-mentioned sermon, nor afterwards, till the next day that he went to his labour, which was grubbing in order to clear some new ground. The first grub he set about was a pretty large one, with a high top, and when he had cut the roots, as it fell down, these words came instantly to his remembrance, 'Cut it down why cumbereth it the ground?' "So," thought he, "must I be cut down, by the justice of God for the burning of hell, unless I get into another state than I am now in." He thus came into very great and abiding distress, which to all appearance has had a happy issue; his conversation being to this day as becomes the gospel of Christ.

The news of this very public appearance of soul-concern among the people, met me an hundred miles from home. I was very joyful to hear of it, in hopes that God was about to carry on an extensive work of converting grace among them. And the first sermon I preached after my return to them, was from Matt. vi. 33. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.' After opening out, and explaining the parts of the text, when, in improvement, I came to press the injunction in the text upon the unconverted and ungodly, and offered this as one reason among others, why they should now, henceforth, first of all seek the kingdom and righteousness of God, viz. "that they had neglected too long to do so already;" this consideration seemed to come and cut like a sword upon several in the congregation; so that while I was upon it, they could no longer contain but burst out in the most bitter mourning. I desired them as much as possible, to restrain themselves from making any noise that would hinder themselves or others from hearing what was spoken: and afterwards I had occasion to repeat the same counsel: I still advised people to endeavour to moderate and bound their passions, but not so to resist and stifle their convictions.—The number of the awakened increased very fast: frequently under sermons there were some newly-convicted, and brought into deep distress of soul concerning their perishing estate.

Our Sabbath-assemblies soon became vastly large; many people from almost all parts around inclining very much to come where there was such appearance of the Divine power and presence. I think there was scarcely a sermon preached here, through that whole summer, but there were manifest evidences of impressions on the hearers, and many times the impressions were very great and general; several would be overcome and fainting; others deeply sobbing, hardly able to contain; others crying in a most dolorous manner; many more silently weeping; and a solemen concern appearing in the countenances of many others. And sometimes the sole-exercises of some, (though comparatively but very few,) would so far affect their bodies as to occasion some strange unusual bodily motions. I had opportunities of speaking particularly with a great many of those who afforded such outward tokens of inward soul-concern in the time of public worship, and hearing of the word. Indeed many came to me of themselves in their distress, for private instruction and counsel; and I found, so far as I can remember, that with by far the greater part, their apparent concern in public was not just a trancient qualm of conscience, or merely a floating commotion of the affections, but a rational, fixed conviction of their dangerous and perishing estate.— PRINCE'S *Christian History*.

Many of the preceding accounts relate to conversions in America, on which large continent the insulated condition of the inhabitants in the inland districts, renders camp-meetings a necessary accommodation to the religious public. It is most devoutly to be wished, that a relish for divine things may be excited in the minds of the new settlers, similer to that which was felt by the first settlers, several of whom were exiles from this country, and from Germany for conscience' sake; and it is most pleasing to learn, that the descendants of these pious individuals entertain a general predilection for all the sacred usages of their courageous and excellent ancestors. Camp-meetings still possess as powerful attractions as they ever did at the commencement of the eighteenth century.

The Rev. Wm. Ward, Serampore, has lately returned to the glorious work in which he has been engaged, upwards of twenty years, among the benighted Heathens in our East India possessions. During his stay in Europe, he was sedulous in his enquiries respecting the state of vital religion among all denominations of christians in every part of the United Kingdom, in which the interests of the Baptist Mission demanded his attendance. Only a few weeks prior to his leaving once again the British shores for India, he had returned from a voyage to the United States of America. About a week after his return from those regions, a correspondent heard him speak in a Missionary meeting belonging to another denomination of Christians. He there related his various peregrinations on that continent, and repeated many of the edifying obser-

vations which he had made on the state of religion in the Union. His account of the American Camp-meetings was most exhilarating, especially since we heard the manner in which they have lately been depricated and held up to ridicule by the uncircumcised in heart among Europeans. In a strain of most impassioned eloquence he described his own holy feelings on attending the first camp-meeting; where all his previous prejudices against them were speedily overcome. He declared, that the sacred influence which was felt on such occasions, and the blessed effects which followed, exceeded the powers of human description. It had been his felicity to be present at several of them; and thought there had been much of what we should have called "confusion" in some of them, yet they were uniformly attended with divine power and the most blessed consequences. But that which is stated as the most remarkable circumstance in his speech, was what he related at the close of it. He said, he had enquired of several aged and experienced ministers of different denominations in the large towns and cities, whether the persons who were the subjects of sudden conversions at camp-meetings, remained steady members of the Church of Christ, and evinced the reality of the change in their hearts and views by the subsequent uprightness of their conduct and the graceful savour of their conversation. He was assured by all those venerable ministers in different parts of the United States, that they had scarcely known a single instance of any one, who had been thus suddenly converted, 'turning again to the weak and begarly elements' of this world; but that such persons were generally eminent for maintaining a heavenly deportment and living in the spirit of the gospel. This testimony in favour of the stability and reality of sudden conversions, is most decisive,—particularly when it is considered that the reverend gentleman is attached to a respectable body of Christians that were never yet accused of having a bias towards what is usually styled "religious enthusiasm."

2. MR. WESLEY'S JOURNALS.

MONDAY, JAN. 1, 1739.—Mr. Hall, Kinckin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchins, and my brother Charles, were present at our love-feast, in Fetter-lane, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning as we continued instant at prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground.—As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his Majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.'

WESLEY'S *Works, vol.* 1. *p.* 358.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17.—I went to Baldwin-street and expounded, as it came in course, the fourth chapter of the Acts.—We then called upon God to confirm his word. Immediately one that stood by, to our no

small surprise, cried out aloud, with the utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death. But we continued in prayer, till a new song was put into her mouth,—a thanksgiving unto our God. Soon after, two other persons (well known in this place as labouring to live in all good conscience towards all men,) were seized with strong pain, and constrained to roar for the disquietness of their hearts. But it was not long before they likewise burst forth into praise to God their Saviour. The last who called upon God as out of the belly of hell, was J—— E——, a stranger in Bristol. And in a short space he also was overwhelmed with joy and love, knowing that God had healed his backslidings. So many living witnesses hath God given, that his hand is still stretched out to heal, and that signs and wonders are even now wrought by his holy child Jesus.

Monday, April 29, 1739.— We understood that many were offended at the cries of those on whom the power of God came; among whom was a physician who was much afraid there might be fraud or imposture in the case. To-day, one whom he had known many years, was the first while I was preaching in Newgate, who broke out into strong cries and tears. He could hardly believe his own eyes and ears. He went and stood close to her, and observed every symptom, until great drops of sweat ran down her face, and all her bones shook. He then knew not what to think, being clearly convinced it was not fraud, nor yet any natural disorder. But when both her soul and body were healed in a moment, he acknowledged the finger of God.

Tuesday, May 1.—Many were offended again, and indeed much more than before. But at Baldwin-street, my voice could scarce be heard amidst the groanings of some and the cries of others, calling aloud 'to him that is mighty to save.' I desired all that were sincere of heart, to beseech with me, 'the Prince exalted for us,' that he would 'proclaim deliverance to the captives.' And he soon shewed that he heard our voice. Many of those who had been long in darkness, saw the dawn of a great light: and ten persons, I afterwards found, then began to say in faith, 'My Lord, and my God!' A Quaker who stood by, was not a little displeased at *the dissimulation of those creatures*, and was biting his lips and knitting his brows, when he dropped down as one thunderstruck. The agony he was in was even terrible to behold. We besought God not to lay folly to his charge. And he soon lifted up his head and cried aloud, 'Now I know that thou art a prophet of the Lord.'

Sunday, May 20.— Perhaps it might be, because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive any thing, unless we see it with our eyes, and hear it with our ears, that God in tender condescension to our weakness, suffered so many outward signs, at the very time when

he wrought this inward change, to be continually seen and heard among us. But although they saw signs and wonders (for so I must term them) yet many would not believe. They could not indeed *deny* the facts; but they could *explain* them away. Some said, 'these were purely natural effects; the people fainted away, only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms.' And others were sure, 'It was all a cheat; they might help it if they would. Else why were these things only in their private societies? why were they not done in the face of the sun?

To-day [Monday 21.] our Lord answered for himself; for while I was enforcing these words, 'Be still, and know that I am God,' he began to make bare his arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One and another and another, were struck to the earth; exceedingly trembling at the presence of his power. Others cried with a loud and bitter cry, 'What must we do to be saved?' and in less than an hour, seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time, were rejoicing and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the God of their salvation. In the evening I was interrupted at Nicholas-street, almost as soon as I had begun to speak, by the cries of one who was 'pricked at the heart,' and strongly groaned for pardon and peace. Yet I went on to declare what God had already done in proof of that important truth, that he is 'not willing any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' Another person dropped down close to one who was a strong assertor of the contrary doctrine. While he stood astonished at the sight, a little boy near him was seized in the same manner. A young man who stood behind, fixed his eyes on him, and sunk down himself as one dead; but soon began to roar out and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. His name was Thomas Maxfield. Except J. H———n, I never saw one so torn of the evil one. Meanwhile many others began to cry out to the Savior of all, that he would come and help them, insomuch that all the house, and indeed all the street, for some space, was in an uproar. But we continued in prayer; and before ten, the greater part found rest to their souls. I was called from supper to one who, feeling in herself such a conviction as she never had known before, had run out of the society in all haste, that she might not expose herself. But the hand of God followed her still, so that after going a few steps, she was forced to be carried home, and when she was there grew worse and worse. She was in a violent agony when we came. We called upon God and her soul found rest. About twelve I was greatly importuned to go and visit one person more. She had only one struggle after I came, and was then filled with peace and joy. I think twenty-nine in all had their heaviness turned into joy this day.—*Vol.* 1. *p.* 378.

"I desire to bless my Lord for the good and great news your letter bears, about the Lord's turning many souls from 'darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God.' As to the outward manner you speak of, wherein most of them were effected who were cut to the heart by the sword of the Spirit, no wonder that this was at first surprising to you, since they are indeed so very rare that have been thus pricked and wounded. Yet some of the instances you give, seem to be exemplified in the outward manner wherein Paul, and the jailor, were at first affected: As also Peter's hearers, Acts ii. The last instance you gave, of some struggling as in the agonies of death, and in such a manner, as that four or five strong men can hardly restrain a weak woman from hurting hers elf or others: this is to me somewhat more inexplicable: if it do not resemble the child spoken of, Mark ix. 26, and Luke ix. 42, of whom it is said, that, 'while he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tore him;' or what influence sudden and sharp awakenings may have upon the body, I pretend not to explain. But I make no question Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons who are thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and, partly to disparage the work of God, as if it tended to lead people to distraction. However the merciful issue of these conflicts, in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing. May the Lord strengthen you to go on in his work! And in praying for the coming of his kingdom with you and us, and I hope you shall not be forgotten among us in our joint applications to the throne of grace.

"I am, reverend and dear Sir,

"Your very affectionate brother and servant in Christ,

"*To the Rev. John Wesley.*" "RALPH ERSKINE."

Vol. 1. *p.* 392.

FRIDAY, JULY 6.—In the afternoon I was with Mr. Whitfield, just come from London, with whom I went to Baptist Mills, where he preached concerning the Holy Ghost, which all who believe are to receive, not without a just though severe censure of those who preach as if there were no Holy Ghost.

SATURDAY, 7.—I had an opportunity to talk with him of those outward signs, which had so often accompanied the inward work of God. I found his objections were chiefly grounded on gross misrepresentations of matter of fact. But the next day he had an opportunity of informing himself better. For no sooner had he begun in the application of his sermon, to invite all sinners to believe in Christ, that four persons sunk down to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body, but made no noise unless by groans. The fourth equally convulsed, called upon God with strong

cries and tears. From this time I trust we shall all suffer God to carry on his own work, in the way that pleaseth him.—*Vol.* 1. *p.* 395.

Tuesday, December 4, 1739.—I was violently attacked by some who were exceedingly angry at those who cried out so, being sure, they said, it was all a cheat, and that any one might help crying if he would. J. B. C. was one of those who were sure of this. About eight, the next morning, while he was alone in the chamber, at private prayer, so horrible a dread overwhelmed him that he began crying out with all his might. All the family were alarmed. Several of them came running up into his chamber, but he cried out so much the more, till his breath was utterly spent. God then rebuked the adversary; and he is now less wise in his own conceit.—*Vol.* 2. *p.* 12.

Monday, 24.—After spending part of the night at Fetter-lane, I went to a smaller company, where also we exhorted one another with hymns and spiritual songs, and poured out our hearts to God in prayer. Towards morning one of them was overwhelmed with joy and love and could not help shewing it by strong cries and tears. At this another was much displeased, saying, "It was only nature, imagination and animal spirits." O thou jealous God, lay not this sin to her charge! and let us not be wise above what is written!—*Vol.* 2. *p.* 16.

Friday, March 12, 1740.—Our Lord was gloriously present with us at the watch-night; so that my voice was lost in the cries of the people. After midnight about a hundred of us walked home together, singing and rejoicing, and praising God.—*Vol.* 2. *p.* 139.

Thursday, December 30.—I carefully examined those who had lately cried out in the congregation. One of them told me, "I was as if I were just falling down from the highest place I had ever seen. I thought the devil was pushing me off, and that God had forsaken me." Another said, "I felt the very fire of hell already kindled in my breast; and all my body was in as much pain as if I had been in a fiery furnace." What wisdom is that which rebuketh these, *that they should hold their peace?* Nay let such an one cry after Jesus of Nazareth, until he saith, 'Thy faith hath made the whole!'—*Vol.* 2. *p.* 180.

May, 1739.—About this time the work of God exceedingly increased under the Rev. Mr. Berridge near Everton. I cannot give a clearer view of this than by transcribing part of the journal of an eye-witness:

Sunday, May 20.—Being with Mr B—ll at Everton, I was much fatigued and did not rise: but Mr. B. did, and observed several fainting and crying out while Mr. Berridge was preaching: afterwards at Church I heard many cry out, especially children, whose agonies were amazing; one of the eldest, a girl ten or twelve years old, was full in my view, in

violent contortions of body, and weeping aloud, I think incessantly, during the whole service: and several much younger children were in Mr. B——ll's view, agonizing as they did. The church was equally crowded in the afternoon, the windows being filled within and without, and the outside of the pulpit to the very top; so that Mr B. seemed almost stifled by their breath; yet feeble and sickly as he is, he was continually strengthened, and his voice for the most part, distinguishable in the midst of all the outcries. I believe there were present three times more men than women, a great part of whom came from far; thirty of them having set out at two in the morning, from a place thirteen miles off. The text was, 'Having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof.' When the power of religion began to be spoken of, the presence of God really filled the place: and while poor sinners felt the sentence of death in their souls, what sounds of distress did I hear! The greatest number of them who cried or fell, were men: but some women and several children, felt the power of the same Almighty Spirit, and seemed just sinking into hell. This occasioned a mixture of various sounds; some shrieking, some roaring aloud. The most general was a loud breathing, like that of people half strangled and gasping for life, and indeed almost all the cries were like those of human creatures dying in bitter anguish. Great numbers wept without any noise; others fell down as dead: some sinking in silence; some with extreme noise and violent agitation. I stood on a pew seat, as did a young man in the opposite pew, an able-bodied, fresh, healthy countryman; but in a moment, while he seemed to think of nothing less, down he dropped with a violence inconceivable. The adjoining pew seemed to shake with his fall: I heard also the stamping of his feet, ready to break the boards, in strong convulsions, at the bottom of the pew. Among several that were struck down in the next pew, was a girl who was as violently seized as he. When he fell, Mr B——ll and I felt our souls filled with a momentary dread, as when one man is killed by a cannon ball, another often feels the wind of it.

Thursday, March 24.—Mr B——ll and I went to hear Mr Hicks, at Wrestlingworth, four miles from Everton. We discoursed with him first, and were glad to hear, he had wholly given himself up to the glorious work of God, and that the power of the Highest fell upon his hearers as upon Mr Berridge's. While he was preaching, fifteen or sixteen felt the arrows of the Lord, and dropped down. A few of these cried out with the utmost violence, and little intermission for some hours, while the rest made no great noise, but continued struggling as in the pangs of death. I observed besides these, one little girl deeply convinced, and a boy, nine or ten years old: both of these, and several others, when carried into the parsonage house, either lay as dead, or struggled with all their might; but in a short time their cries increased

beyond measure, so that the loudest singing could scarcely be heard. Some at last called on me to pray, which I did: and for a time all were calm: but the storm soon began again. Mr. Hicks then prayed, and afterwards Mr B——ll: but still, though some received consolation, others remained in deep sorrow of heart. Upon the whole, I remark, that few ancient people experience any thing of this work of God; and scarcely any of the rich. These either shew an utter contempt or an enmity to it. Indeed so did Mr. Hicks himself sometime since; having so deep an aversion to it, that he denied the Sacrament to those of his parish who went to hear Mr Berridge. Neither of these gentlemen has much eloquence, but rather weak in speech: the Lord hereby more clearly shewing that this is his own work. It extends into Cambridgeshire, to within a mile of the University, and about as far into Huntingdonshire; but flourishes most of all in the eastern and northern parts of Bedfordshire. There were three farmers, in three several villages, who violently set themselves to oppose it: and, for a time, they kept many from going to hear: but all three died in about a month. One of them owned the hand of the Lord was upon him, and besought him in the bitterness of his soul to prolong his life, vowing to hear Mr B. himself: but the Lord would not be entreated. The violent struggling of many in the above mentioned churches has broken several pews and benches. Yet it is common for people to remain unaffected there, and afterwards drop down in their way home. Some have been found lying as dead on the road: others in B's garden, not being able to walk from the church to his house, though it is not two hundred yards.—*Vol.* 3. *p.* 372.

Sunday, July 15, 1759.—I began reading to the Society an account of the late work of God at Everton: but I could not get through. At first there were only silent tears on every side. But it was not long before several were unable to refrain from weeping aloud. And quickly a stout young man dropped down and roared as in the agonies of death. I did not attempt to read any further, but began wrestling with God in prayer. We continued herein till nearly nine o'clock. What a day of jubilee was this!—*Vol.* 3. *p*, 386.

Monday, August 6.—I preached at eight, on 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.' The whole congregation were earnestly attentive: but not above one or two cried out; and I did not observe any that fainted away, either then or in the morning. I have generally observed more or less of these outward symptoms to attend the beginning of a general work of God. So it was in New England, Scotland, Holland, Ireland, and many parts of England: but after a time they gradually decrease, and the work goes on more quietly and silently. Those whom it pleases God to employ in his work,

ought to be quite passive in this respect. They should *choose* nothing, but leave entirely to Him all the circumstances of his own work.

Vol. 3. *p.* 403.

Sunday, Nov. 25. — I was a little afraid my strength would not suffice for reading prayers, and preaching, and administering the Lord's Supper alone, to a large number of communicants: but all was well. Mr. Hicks began his own service early, and came before I had ended my sermon. So we finished the whole before two, and I had time to breathe before the evening service. In the afternoon, God was eminently present with us, though rather to comfort than convince. But I observed a remarkable difference, since I was here before, as to the manner of the work. None now were in trances, none cried out, none fell down, or were convulsed; only some trembled exceedingly: a low murmur was heard; and many were refreshed with the multitude of peace. The danger *was* to regard extraordinary circumstances too much, such as outcries convulsions, visions, trances, as if these were essential to the inward work, so that it could not go on without them; perhaps the danger *is*, to regard them too little, to condemn them altogether, to imagine they had nothing of God in them, and were an hindrance to his work. Whereas the truth is, — 1. God suddenly and strongly convinced many that they were lost sinners; the natual consequences whereof were sudden outcries, and strong bodily convulsions. 2. To strengthen and encourage them that believed, and to make his work more apparent, he favoured several of them with Divine dreams, others with trances and visions. 3. In some of these instances, after a time, nature mixed with grace. 4. Satan, likewise mimicked this work of God, in order to discredit the whole work, and yet it is not wise to give up this part any more than to give up the whole. At first it was doubtless, wholly from God: it is partly so at this day: and he will enable us to discern how far, in every case, the work is pure, and where it mixes or degenerates. Let us even suppose that, in some few cases, there was a mixture of dissimulation: that persons pretended to see or feel what they did not, and imitated the cries, or convulsive motions of those who were really overpowered by the Spirit of God: yet even this should not make us either deny or undervalue the real work of the Spirit. The shadow is no disparagement of the substance, nor the counterfeit of the real diamond. We may further suppose that satan will make these visions an occasion of pride. But what can be inferred from hence? Nothing but that we should guard against it: that we should diligently exhort all to be little in their own eyes, knowing that nothing avails with God but humble love. But still, to slight or censure visions in general, would be both irrational and unchristian. — *Vol.* 3. *p.* 413.

3. MR. WATSON.

As a most excellent commentary on the preceding accounts, are subjoined the following very able and judicious extracts from Mr. Watson's Observations on Southerly's Life of Wesley:

To influence the will, and move the affections to serious and spiritual objects, the truths of religion must be presented to the mind,—for nothing beside has ever been known to produce those effects. But to some persons these truths may come in the slow process of elementary instruction, and careful advice from childhood; to others they may be presented, in all their great features, at once; or they may be suddenly revived in their minds, and to them they will have the additional interest which arises from novelty, the habits of life having taken them out of the way of regular instruction, and their religious education having either been neglected, or its impressions obliterated by the long practice of vice. In such cases, what reason can Mr. Southey give, why the display of the stirring and solemn truths of the gospel, unfolded by a living preacher with earnestness, perspicuity, and pathos, should not produce strong and sudden effects, and that the impressions thus made should not be deep and lasting? A true philosophy might have informed him, that minds are differently constituted; that some men are slow to judge and to feel, and that what they hear rarely produces any great immediate effect. The impression is made by subsequent reflection: like the ruminating animals, they do not feed for immediate digestion, but reserve that to a second process. In others the intellectual powers are more active, and the affections more yielding. Minds of this class are easily won to an opinion, or course of action, in the common affairs of life; and there exists no reason why this peculiarity of mental disposition should not influence religious experience, though a super-human agent must necessarily be supposed carrying on his designs, and exerting his influence, along *with*, and *by*, our constitutional qualities. It would be as manifestly absurd to deny, that true conversion may follow a sudden impression upon yielding minds, and to affirm, that it must be confined to persons of slow and hesitation intellects, as, that a decisive course of action, of any kind, cannot follow when the motives to it are urged upon a susceptible spirit, and the force of them is immediately admitted. Determination of the will, and perseverance in effort, are essential to rational and proper conduct of any kind. But with whatever variety the Creator has formed the human spirit, it is not to be supposed, that it has, in any case, a constitution which renders decisive choice, and perseverance, impracticable. These effetcs do not always result from slow and reluctant operations of mind; they are not inconsistent with susceptibility. Each disposition has its disadvantages, and each its excellence. The cautious need energy; the ardent watchfulness

and support; but every thing rich in sentiment, firm in choice, and constant in action, may exist in each class of character. To suppose the contrary, would be a reflection on our Maker, who uses variety as the means of exhibiting his wisdom, but never sacrifices to it his own great and beneficent purposes, and the moral capabilities of his creatures. From those sudden yieldings of the mind to impressions of a religious kind which are so frequently the objects of Mr. Southey's scoffs, what then can be reasonably concluded? Mr. Southey may not believe in the necessity of Divine influence in order to conversion; but if he thinks conversion from sin to holiness possible, by any means; and that nothing more is necessary to effect it than the declaration of the doctrines and sanctions of religion, even then had he considered the variety of our mental constitution, his philosophy would have been quite as respectable had he allowed, that the decisive turn might have been given to the will suddenly, and that such an effect is not only a very possible, but a very natural circumstance. The converts in question were not above the necessity of further instruction; they had, it may be granted, much to learn, and their very susceptibility exposed them to the danger of unsteadfastness; but it is enough for the argument, if views of the truth and solemnity of religion were communicated in sufficient force to influence a right choice, and to produce a new order of affections; that the determination was decided to lead them to renounce evil, and to frequent, those ordinances of religion which would administer to them further light, and renewed strength. But we do not think with Mr. Southey, that convertion is a natural process, though carried on through, and by our natural powers. We are better instructed, I hope, in the Scriptures, and in the doctrine of all true churches; though, if we allowed the correctness of Mr. Southey's view of this great change, it is sufficiently manifest, that no good reason lies against, the notion, that conversion may be effected much more rapidly in some minds than in others; and that suddeness and slowness are mere circumstances, quite unconnected with the essence of the question.

We believe the testimony of Scripture, that the Spirit is not only given to the disciples of Christ, after they assume that character, but in order to their becoming his disciples; that, according to the words of our Lord, he is sent "to convince the world of sin," to the end that they may believe in Christ; and that whenever the Gospel is faithfully and fully proclaimed by the ministers of Chirst, it is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and is made so by the accompanying influence of the Holy Ghost. If, for this belief, we are charged with fanaticism, we are in too much good company to be put out of countenance; but if this doctrine be allowed, it will be difficult to prove Mr. Wesley a fanatic for his belief in the reality of sudden conversions. Who shall prescribe a mode to Divine operation? Who,

if he believes in such an influence accompanying the truth, shall presume to say, that when inspired truth is proposed, the attention of the careless shall be roused by a gradual and slow process only? — that the heart shall not be brought into a state of right feeling as to eternal concerns, but by a reiteration of means which we think most adapted to produce that effect? — or, that no influence on the mind is genuine and Divine, if it operate not in a prescribed manner? — that the Holy Spirit shall not avail himself of the variety which exists in the mental constitutions of men, to effect his purposes of mercy by different methods? — and that the operations of grace shall not present, as well as those of nature, that beauteous variety which so much illustrates the glory of Him, "who worketh all in all?" And who shall say, that even the peculiarities of men's natures shall not, in many instances, be even set aside in the course of a divine and secret operation, touching the springs of action, and opening the sources of feeling; giving an intensity of action to the one, and a flow to the other, which shall more eminently mark his finger in a work which his own glory, and the humility proper to man, require should be known and acknowledged as the work of God alone? Assuredly there is nothing in the reason of the case to fix the manner of producing such effects to one rule, and nothing in Scripture.

Instances of sudden conversion occur in the New Testament in sufficient number to warrant us to conclude, that this may be often the mode, adopted by Divine wisdom, and especially in a slumbering age, to arouse attention to long despised and neglected truths. The conversions at the day of Pentecost were sudden, and, for any thing that appears to the contrary, they were real; for the persons so influenced were thought worthy to be "added to the church." Nor was it by the miracle of tongues that the effect was produced. If miracles could have converted them, they had witnessed greater than even that glorious day exhibited. The dead had been raised up in their sight; the earth had quaked beneath their feet; the sun had hid himself, and made an untimely night; the graves had given up their dead; and Christ himself had arisen from a tomb sealed and watched. It was not by the impression of the miracles of tongues alone, but by that supervenient gracious influence which operated with the demonstrated sermon of Peter, after the miracle had excited the attention of his hearers, that they were "pricked in their hearts, and cried, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

The only true rule of judging of professed conversion is its fruits. The mode may vary from circumstances of which we are not the judges, nor can be, until we know more, both of the mystic powers of mind and of that intercourse which Almighty God in his goodness condescends to hold with it. Our Author is certainly not a better judge of these matters than others; and the reality of the conversion of thousands by

the honored ministry of Mr. Wesley stands on evidence too decisive to be shaken by the objections he takes to the mode; and it would be still unshaken were those objections more powerful than he has been able to make them. By the effects we are content that the conversions produced under the preaching of the founders of Methodism should be judged.—*Page* 86.

Mr. Southey, indeed, like the rest of his school, considers it spiritual pride and boasting for any to speak of themselves, even as instruments in the hand of God, however humble the manner in which this may be professed; and this is a conclusion natural enough to men who are not conscious of having ever been employed under a divine direction in the accomplishment of any great and beneficial purpose, and to whom prayer for success in such an endeavour would appear gross enthusiasm. This is the fault of the school in which Mr. Southey has been trained. I dispute not with it. If Mr. Wesley erred in this, he erred with St. Paul, and with every minister of Christ distinguished for his success in the conversion of men, and the revival of the spirit of true religion. All true Christians know that a belief in their own instrumentality as agents of the divine mercy to men, is perfectly consistent with humility of mind; and with them it will be a sufficient answer to the aspersion, — that Mr. Wesley was anxious to record singular successes, and answers to his prayers, in order to "proclaim his power," — that this is contradicted both by his writings, and the spirit in which he lived and died. He recorded them, in every case where he believed the effect to be genuine, not to proclaim his own power, but "*the power of God.*"

Nor does it follow, as Mr. Southey seems to have understood it, that every instance of strong impression produced under his preaching, was considered by Mr. Wesley as genuine; or that, by recording such circumstances in his Journal or Magazine, he gave an opinion in their favour. He believed some of these effects to be the results of natural sympathy; others to be imitations of Mr. Southey's "personified principle of evil," to bring into disrepute the work of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of men, of the reality of which he was firmly persuaded, and on grounds perhaps as strong as those on which Mr. Southey accounts it enthusiasm; for he brought to the examination of the question, beyond all doubt, quite as good a store of logic and of learning. Some deceptions he not only admitted, but publicly stated, not indeed to establish the sweeping conclusion that all was unreal, because a part, a very small part, was visionary; that all was of satan, because all was not of God. Mr. Wesley was wisely tender even in cases to which Mr. Southey and other superficial thinkers on religious subjects would have showed no moderation; and sufficient reasons might be given to justify his conduct though, in some instances, his charity was carried to excess. He had seen strong and singular effects produced upon many of his hearers;

he had also seen great good, amounting to an entire moral change, consequent upon them. It was his intence desire to see this latter result produced, which made him regard the former of much less consequence than they appear to Mr. Southey. He lost the *circumstances* in the *essence* of the case; Mr. Southey would have measured the essence by the circumstances. Had Mr. Southey been a clergyman at that period, in vain would a disconsolate spirit have come to him for spiritual advice, except the phrase in which it was sought had been quite "rational," and the deportment of the person very measured. The mention of the "burden of sin," though found in his Liturgy, would have called up all his suspicions of fanaticism; a sob from a broken heart would have seriously disturbed his philosophic composure; and any expression of mental agony in the positions of the body, or aspect of the countenance, would probably have put him to flight. Mr. Wesley had other views. He had seen real good consequent upon these circumstances; but he never believed that good to flow from them *as its cause*. He went higher than that. Those emotions might be the collateral or the secondary effects of the same cause, or they might result from a different one. In every case he hoped for good, and therefore sought it; one great secret of his success.—*Page* 96.

He unquestionably believed in special effusions of the influence of the Holy Spirit upon congregations and individuals, producing powerful emotions of mind, expressed in some instances by bodily affections: and he has furnished some facts on which Mr. Southey has exercised his philosophy, probably, with a success more satisfactory to himself, than convincing to his readers. But that any thing extraordinary, either of bodily or mental affection, was with him, *at any time* of his life, of itself, deemed so important as to be regarded as a mark of superior piety, is a most unfounded assumption. Those of his Sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament, which contain the doctrines which he deemed essential; and the Rules by which every member his societies was required to be governed, are sufficiently in refutation of this notion. In them no reference is made to any thing visionary as a part, however small, of true religion; except the whole of a spiritual religion changing the heart, and sanctifying the affections, be thought visionary.

Page 100.

Mr. Southey would have been much better entitled to the praise of a fair and candid reasoner, on the principles of scripture, had he exercised as to these facts some discrimination. He would then have said; "Here are effects, which, whatever may be thought of the manner in which they were produced, are clearly proved by their fruits to be genuine; here are others which may be called hopeful; others suspicious; others deceptive." Any difference of opinion which remained as to particular cases, or the proportion to be assigned to each class, might then have

been easily settled. Mr. Wesley did not believe that all who were affected by his ministry, were converted; nor that all presented an equally hopeful character: but he knew, by their subsequent conduct, that great numbers were enlightened and sanctified by the truth of the Gospel; and among them many in whom those strong emotion had been excited which our author considers so fatally indicative of "the high fever of enthusiasm." Many good effects are indeed acknowledged by the author; and yet good, bad, and doubtful are resolved into enthusiasm as their common and philosophic cause. Thus has he gone much beyond all his predecessors in puzzling and confounding a term, before sufficiently equivocal, by allowing it to have effected, in many instances, a moral and a "permanent benefit," and in assigning to enthusiasm the office which has been usually attributed exclusively to true religion.

Page 103.

Had Mr. Southey known the best part of the history of Christianity, he would have recollected, that, upon the decline of true piety in that part of the Church of Christ, which occupies, unfortunately, for the instuction of mankind, the most conspicuous place in its annals, there were not wanting holy and zealous ministers to carry out the tidings of salvation to the barbarous ancestors of European nations, and that strong, and effectual impressions were made by their faithful and powerful preaching upon the savage multitudes who surrounded them, accompanied with many effects similar to those which attended the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitefield: for all who went on these sacred missions were not enthusiasts, nor were all the conversions effected by them a mere exchange of superstitions. He would have known, that similar effects accompanied the preaching of many eminent men at the Reformation; and that many of the Puritan ministers had similar successes in large districts in our own country. I as much differ from the politics of some of these divines as Mr. Southey; but I envy not the mind which can forget, in this consideration, their elevated piety, their vast theological acquirements, their laborious occupancy of time, and that "fruitful preaching," to use the expressive phrase of the day, which filled their parishes with a light and truth which, had not the violence of political parties on both sides served by different processes to extinguish it, would probably have left the founders of Methodism a much narrower sphere of action. He would have known that, in Scotland, similar effects had been produced by the ministry of faithful men, attended by very similar circumstances; and also among the grave Presbyterians of New England, previous to the rise of Methodism, and he would have been informed, that, though on a smaller scale, the same results have followed the ministry of modern Missionaries of different religious Societies in different parts of the world. The circumstances on which Mr. Southey dwells, though extraordinary, were not therefore, as he represents them,

either new or peculiar to Methodism; and his method of accounting for them must take a wider range to meet all the cases to which we have adverted. It may be laid down as a principle established by fact, that, whenever a zealous and faithful ministry is raised up, after a long spiritual dearth, the early effects of that ministry, are not only powerful but often attended with extraordinary circumstances; nor are such extraordinary circumstances extravagancies, because they are not common.

There is a doctrine of which Mr. Southey has probably never heard, but it may, perhaps, better explain these phenomena than the absurdites which he adopts; and though, of course, I must be numbered with enthusiasts in his estimation, it will not cost me much anxiety to offer it as a much better solution than any which his work contains. If there be a truth in Scripture explicit and decided, it is this, that the success of the ministry of the Gospel, in the conversion of men, is the consequence of Divine influence; and if there be a well-ascertained fact in ecclesiastical story, it is, that no great results of this kind have been produced but by men who have acknowledged this truth, and have gone forth in humble dependence upon that promised co-operation contained in the words, "And lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." This fact, equally striking and notorious, is a strong confirmation that the sense of the Sacred Oracles on this point was not mistaken by them. The testimony of the word of God is, that as to ministerial success, "God giveth the increase;" the testimony of experience is, that no success in producing true conversion has ever taken place in any church but when this co-operation of God has been acknowledged and sought by the agents employed in it. — *Page* 105.

4. THE METHODIST MAGAZINE.

Miss B. to the Rev. Mr. Wesley.

The Sunday after you went, Mr. M. preached at Spitalfields. After the sermon, the power of God was very present. Many were groaning and weeping before the Lord, when Sarah Webb, falling down to the ground, cried aloud, declaring that God had set her soul at liberty. At the same time, one at the bottom of the chapel declared, the Lord had made him whole. The flame now began to spread, and every one seemed to feel God was in that place. Fourteen or fifteen persons desired in the evening to give God thanks, for the blessings they then received. I remain, Dear Sir, yours &c. M. B.

Vol. 4. *p.* 278.

Mr. A. Marther to Mr. Wesley.

Now there are above thirty out of the forty-eight who have saving faith, and who have received it within these last six weeks, yea, many in

a fortnight. And as their grace, so their number has increased thirty-three this quarter. Twenty-seven of them I joined last Thursday and Friday, many of whom had scarce ever heard till that week. Is any thing too hard for the Almighty? Thou workest and who can stay thy hand!

The remarkable work amongst the outward people was occasioned by an apprentice of Mr. Thomas Day, whose heart the Lord touched in such a manner on Sundey night, (December 7,) that he could not rest, but roared the whole night, to the great alarming of the whole family and neighborhood. They prayed with him, but he still remained miserable till Monday morning when his distress was such, that his crying brought many together, insomuch that the house was filled and surrounded with people: before whom it pleased God to deliver him, and so to inflame his heart with love, and fill his mouth with praise, that the beholders were astonished.

It pleased God also to open his mouth to speak to those who were present, so that none were able to resist the Spirit and power wherewith he spake. They fell before his word, cried for mercy, and above twelve were delivered that day. It would rejoice your heart to see them under the word; particularly two children, about nine years of age, who talk so feelingly of the love of God, that they would amaze you. Oh Lord! maintain thy glorious cause, and ride prosperously in the gospel chariot, till the nations bow before thee; and take thou all the glory, for thou art worthy! I am, &c.

Vol. 3. *p.* 497. A. MATHER.

Mr. Mather to Mr. Wesley.

As I wrote to you the most minute circumstances of the work, and you were there in the very height of it, you judged it best to place me in the circuit another year. But I made a false step in the beginning of it. Longing for peace, and preferring the judgment of other men to my own, I agreed that my wife should not hold any more prayer-meetings. Immediately the work began to decay, both as to its swiftness and extensiveness. And though I continued to insist as strongly as ever upon the same points, yet there was not the same effect for want of seconding by prayer-meetings the blow which was given in preaching.

Vol. 8. *p.* 156.

Mr. Wesley to the Rev. Mr. D.

Liverpool, April 6, 1761.

DEAR SIR, — Let who will speak, if what is spoken be true, I am ready to subscribe it. If it be not, I accept no man's person, *Magis amica veritas.* I had an agreeable conversation with Mr. Venn, who I suppose is now near you. I think he is exactly as regular as he ought to be. I would observe every punctilio of order, except where the sal-

vation of souls is at stake. There I prefer the end before the means.

Dear Sir, yours, &c.

Vol. 3. p. 672. JOHN WESLEY.

City Road, London, Jan. 5, 1780.

I earnestly desire that all our preachers would seriously consider the preceding account. And let them not be content never to speak against *the great salvation*, either in public or private; and never to discourage, either by word or deed, any that think they have attained it. No: but prudently encourage them, to hold fast whereunto they have attained. And strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to go on to perfection; yea, to expect full salvation from sin every moment, by mere grace, through simple faith. JOHN WESLEY.

Vol. 3. p. 207.

From. Mr. A. Mather.

When we heard [at Hull] of the great outpouring of the grace of God upon the circuits in the west riding of Yorkshire, where hundreds, and even thousands, have lately been awakened and converted; a very earnest desire was kindled in the hearts of the people, especially among the leaders, for a revival in our society, and which impelled us to address the throne of grace, both in public and private, with ardent importunity. One hindrance, perhaps to such displays of the awakening power of God, as were manifested in other places, was, a too anxious attachment to decorum and order; and consequently a strong aversion to loud lamentations and cries, especially in the public congregation, which circumstances were common in various parts of the country where the work of conviction had recently broken out: However, at the Christmas love-feast, this difficulty was surmounted; and in some degree we were willing to let God work upon the minds of the people, which way he pleased, although we should incur the disagreeable reproach of being accounted enthusiasts. At this meeting we were put to the trial, and bore it very well; one person being in great distress of mind, cried out mightily for mercy, and was soon delivered.

[He then describes at some length the particulars of the revival, and proceed thus:]

The circumstances, of two or three persons praying at the same time, in different parts of the chapel, while some were encouraging the distressed, and others praising the Lord for benefits received, occasioned some idle bystanders to report through the town, "that it was all confusion." Undoubtedly, it must have had this appearance to persons destitute of sympathy for the disconsolate mourners, and uninterested in the happiness of pardoned penitents. But the seeming disorder, as matters then stood, was unavoidable, nor did any disagreeable conse-

quences follow. There was nothing irrational or unscriptural in these meetings. It was perfectly *natural* for sinners who were overwhelmed with a sense of their sin and misery, to cry aloud for help to Him who is mighty to save; and on some occasions, to be inattentive to every surrounding object. They were conscious of the depravity of their hearts, and the sinfulness of their lives;—against God they had sinned and fallen short of his glory;—the burthen they felt was intolerable; forgetting, for a moment, their fellow-creatures, they cried out aloud for the disquietude of their souls, as if only God was present, and the sole spectator of their sorrows. When the answer of peace returned, and they were filled with unexpected and unspeakable comfort, it is no wonder if their joy was as excessive, for a time, as their preceding sorrow had been.

March 25. I set our on my journey into Staffordshire. Mr. Grant attended the prayer-meeting at Hull that week and the following. From twenty to thirty persons found peace at every meeting. I returned on the 6th of April, and in the course of a week added upwards of one hundred and fifty, the greater part of whom were awakened and converted during the time of my absence. Mr. Stephenson, from Bridlington, preached, and attended the prayer-meeting, which continued till he began to preach again next morning at five o'clock. About thirty were converted that night. The work continued to prosper every day during the ensuing week, both at the chapel and in private houses.

April 13. We had our love-feast; many of the new converts stood up before the congregation, and gave a clear and satisfactory account of the work of God upon their hearts. The meeting continued till five o'clock, and it was then with reluctance that they departed. The chapel was crowded with deeply serious hearers at six o'clock, and the prayer-meeting began as soon as the preaching concluded, and continued till ten, when the congregation was dismissed a second time, and they were intreated to return home, especially all those whose family affairs required their attendance. But this requisition had very little effect, for the greater part continued in prayer till one or two o'clock; and even some remained till the morning preaching. Above twenty found peace. At this meeting were present many of our friends from the country societies, whose souls the Lord abundantly blessed; they returned home greatly rejoicing and praising God for the things which they had heard and seen. They likewise faithfully represented these matters to their brethren in various parts of the circuit; their testimony was received, and, through the Divine blessing, proved the means of stirring up the people to seek the Lord with redoubled diligence and earnestness.—From that time the work revived in many places in the country, and in a few weeks some hundreds were convinced and converted.

Since the 12th of May, the Lord has favoured us with refreshing seasons, but we have not had so many instances of persons being under deep convictions, and consequently not so many clear conversions. It is difficult, though perhaps not impossible, to assign the reasons of this decline. Those who have seen extraordinary revivals of religion, know that it is impossible, on these occasions, to prevent irregularities; and that even an attempt to remove some inconveniences, at such a season, is too frequently succeeded by an interruption of that fervency of spirit, and lively exercise of faith and hope, which are so necessary for facilitating the increase and progress of the work. Some religious persons of other dedominations, exclaimed, "That this work was too sudden in itself, and irregular in its manner, to be of God." These reflections being spread through the different circles of their acquaintance, had probably a tendency to lessen the ardour of those who were zealous for the cause of God, and discourage others who were seeking salvation. But the clamour that was raised on account of the meetings being sometimes continued to a late hour, seemed of greater importance; especially as it was insinuated, that it was not only disagreeable to many families, but offensive to the magistrates. These considerations induced us to attempt some regulations, in the most gentle way, so as scarce to be perceived. And we supposed ourselves justified in our proceedings, as we acted from the motive of preserving civil and religious peace. Yet we are now doubtful, that our well-meant endervours to remove every stumbling block out of the way, have given a check to the work; and that we have been more anxious to please men, and avoid a part of the cross, than to bear reproach for the sake of Christ.

At River-bridge, our prospect has been but very discouraging for a long season; neither the young, nor the old, regarding the things which make for their peace. Some of the aged would hear us attentively on the Sunday forenoon, and seemed affected while under the word nevertheless they continued to walk as they did before: but the younger would neither be governed nor instructed. In order to promote their reformation, a Sunday school was set up in the place, and two of our brethren undertook to teach the children gratis. At first, a considerable number of children attended regularly, but they soon became quite careless, and followed the example of the elder boys, who were wholly addicted to Sabbath-breaking. The young people of the village had formed a plan for a foot-ball match on Easter Monday, and some of them spent Good Friday in preparing the instrument for their diversion. On Easter Sunday, the leader of our society went in the afternoon to Hotham church (about four miles distant) and some of the young people accompanied him, which he thought strange, as they were wont to shun all converse with him. He improved the opportunity, and spoke very closely to them, on the danger of living in sin, and the necessity of

repentance. They heard the sermon in the church with more than common attention; and as soon as the service was over, they joined him again, and he resumed his former conversation all the way home, with which they appeared well satisfied. At parting, the leader said to them, "Lads, we shall have a prayer meeting at eight o'clock; if any of you please to come, you shall be very welcome; and bring as many with you as you think proper." They came accordingly, and brought some of their companions with them. The meeting was very solemn, and the young folks were much affected, and although it continued a considerable time, they were unwilling to go away.

The leader was present at that remarkable love-feast at Hull, (already mentioned in this narrative,) and not only noticed the progress of the work, but likewise was engaged in prayer, and speaking to those who were under the power of conviction; numbers of whom he had seen happily released from the guilt and dominion of sin; and this evening he perceived a probabillty of a similar work at River-bridge, but was affraid they should not be able to continue the meeting, as there were only three or four persons present, who had any tolerable gift of prayer: he therefore requested one of the brethren to go out, and endeavour to get help, as the distress of the lads and young men increased so much, as not to be concealed any longer; for their cries were heard in the street, and many persons began to assemble about the door. In the mean time, the leader requested one of our society, who had been converted in her youth, and whose experience was clear and spiritual, to give the people a particular relation of God's dealings with her soul. This she was enabled to do, notwithstanding she was at that time under affliction, in so lively and striking a manner, that every sentence took place in the minds of the people, and increased their desires, and encouraged them to hope for the mercy of God. Not only the house was filled with people, but the stairs and work-shop, and many stood without. Some came out of curiosity, to hear or see something new; but the greater part were concerned for their souls.

In the village were some persons who were not only enlightened, but they really had tasted that the Lord is gracious, and walked comfortably for some years, in the profession and practice of religion, till the thorns of deceitful riches, and the desire of other things, had well nigh choaked the good seed. Our brother who went to call in assistance, ran to their houses without ceremony, and delivered his message faithfully. Particularly, he addressed the master of one respectable family that he visited, to this purpose, "Mr. C——, yonder are three of your children in great distress for their souls! For Christ's sake, come and help us to pray for them, that he may be merciful to them, and forgive all their sins!" Mr. C—— followed him: with some difficulty he got into the room, and fell down upon his knees. For an hour he continued in an

agony of prayer for his own soul, till the Lord restored unto him the light of his countenance, and once more filled him with peace and joy in believing. He then was exceedingly helpful, not only to his own children, but to every one that was in distress. That night, upwards of twenty were enabled to praise God for the manifestation of his pardoning love.

In consequence of this blessed revival at the Bridge, the young people engaged themselves on Easter Monday, in a quite different employment from that which they originally intended, and had made provision for: The instrument which they had idolized, and expected to be the source of abundance of happiness to them, now became the object of hatred and condemnation. When the question was agitated among them, "What shall be done with the foot-ball?" One said, "Let us sell it." But another replied, "No; that cannot be right; for if it is a snare to us, it must be the same to others; therefore, let us not sell it, but destroy it." To this determination they all fully agreed; and after it was cut in pieces, they threw it away with utter detestation.

At the end of three weeks, I visited the new converts at the Bridge and Gilberdyke, and spoke to most of them: I found them truly alive to God, and athirst for all the blessings of the gospel. I remarked, that many of them were under fourteen years of age, that their parents were in general, altogether careless: I could not help observing the divine goodness, in supplying the lack of ungodly parents, and reproving them, by so wonderfully converting their children. While I was preaching at the Bridge on Monday evening, I was obliged to stop three times, to praise God for delivering souls from the burden of their sins. After preaching, the prayer-meeting continued till a late hour, and the Lord manifested his pardoning mercy to seven persons more before the meeting concluded.

It is not to be wondered at, that the extraordinary work at Riverbridge, should be the subject of much conversation, far and near; and that different constructions were put upon it: some saying, "It is only among the children and young people, and will soon come to nothing:" others replying, "It could be no work of God, because it was so sudden, and attended with much noise and disorder." However, they generally acknowledged, that for the present, there was a very great alteration for the better among the people; no cursing or swearing, or horrible language, being now heard in the streets, no Sabbath-breaking or assemblies of young people in the fields for the purpose of vain and wicked diversions on the Lord's day; and therefore, it is a matter of thankfulness that so much good is already done.

Since that time, the work continues to prosper, and has spread to many other villages, where ten, fifteen, and twenty persons have been converted at a meeting, and sometimes more; so wonderfully does the

Lord visit his people with the convincing and saving influences, whereby they are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God. ALEXANDER MATHER.

Mr. Moon to the Rev. Dr. Coke.

Sheffield, Aug. 22, 1794.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—At our last quarterly love feast [in Sheffield] the fire broke out in a more extraordinary and amazing manner. The meeting began with its usual calmness and order, and so continued till we were about to conclude. But while we thought hereon, a person came and requested our prayers for one that was in deep distress; and soon after, the same request was repeated for a woman in the gallery. I then desired two or three of the local preachers to go and pray with her, intending to keep my place, and conduct the remaining part of the meeting with all possible decorum. It being, however, a new thing, and to them not a little strange, they appeared relunctant to go. I knew not now what to do; I hesitated for a moment; but the cry of distress still prevailing, I determined to sacrifice regularity to the season of usefulness which presented itself to me. I therefore went up into the gallery and prayed with the afflicted person: but I must acknowledge, so awkwardly did I enter on this important duty, through my great attachment to order, that I found very little access to the throne of grace; and, perhaps, as a punishment of my reluctance to engage, and my awkwardness in performing the work, I had not the answer of my prayer. When I concluded, one of the local preachers below gave out a hymn and prayed. And now the power of God in a wonderful manner filled the place. The cries of the distressed instantly broke out like a clap of thunder, from every part of the chapel, and the person's voice who was engaged in prayer, though exceeding loud, could no longer be heard. I now determined to resume my place, that I might, at least in some tolerable degree, regulate our further proceedings. But before I could accomplish this design, some of the local preachers had spread themselves among those who were so greatly distressed, and were praying for them; while others came enquiring what I would wish them to do. I recommended to them the same work in which their brethren were already employed; so that, I suppose, in two minutes, ten little parties were praying in different parts of the chapel at the same time. In a few minutes, one of our friends informed me, that seventeen persons found peace with God in the gallery, and, perhaps, at least half that number below. I never saw any thing like it. It could not but appear, to an idle spectator, all confusion; but to those who were engaged therein, it was a glorious regularity. It must be granted, that cries for mercy, and thanks for pardoning love, ascended in a wondrously mixed, but grateful incense, before the heavenly throne.

Even little boys and girls have now prayer-meetings among themselves; and one company of lads meet constantly in the evening, when the weather is fine, in a field; they form a circle, and pray for each other, till they have some signal answer of divine approbation. In this meeting, simple as it may appear to some, two or three have sometimes been set at liberty before they parted. From the reflections I have been led to make on this extraordinary work, together with what has lately taken place through Yorkshire, I am led to conclude, that this must surely be a prelude to that glorious conquest of grace which, we are prophetically assured, shall take place in the last days; and hence, is eminently preparing the way for the *grand Millennial reign* of our *redeeming* God. *Amen, Even so, come*, Lord Jesus. I am, with all due respect and affection, dear Sir, yours in the gospel,

John Moon.

Mr. Wood to the Rev. Dr. Coke.

Wakefield, June 7, 1794.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—There has been a gradual in-gathering in almost every place in this country ever since the last Conference, but more abundantly so since the 3d of February last, when our friends at Woodhouse, near Leeds, met together for a prayer-meeting, at 8 o'clock in the evening. Soon after they had begun, the Lord poured down his Spirit; one, and then another, found peace with God, while others entered into a fuller rest. They continued till about six in the morning, during which time, about twenty persons were brought into liberty.

On our last quarter-day, at the watch-night, the Lord began to work in Wakefield, in a manner we had not seen, and by one o'clock in the morning about twenty persons could praise God for justifying or sanctifying grace. On the 12th ult. we had another watch-night: we began at seven o'clock, and for more than two hours there seemed rather a dulness both upon the preachers and people: But God was entreated, and in a short space of time there appeared to be twenty persons on their knees crying for mercy, some of whom were, in about half an hour, rejoicing in God, and publicly declaring what the Lord had done for their souls. This had a happy effect on others, and many were brought under deep convictions by hearing and seeing the happiness of those that had found peace. We continued till after four in the morning, in which time near one hundred persons were either made happy, or deeply sensible of their guilt and misery. We have now some stirring up in every place in our circuit: and sinners, of every description, are brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

Some of those persons had been in Society for months, or years, resting in good desires; others had only heard preaching a few times; and

many had no concern till the moment they were cut to heart with a painful sense of their lost condition. In some the distress was great, the anguish of spirit affecting the body, and drops of sweat issued from every pore; in others, there was no remarkable terror, but a consciousness of the want of Divine faith and love. Sometimes they continued an hour or two without any deliverance, but many were enabled to believe much sooner. Those that are brought through much distress, are generally led into a calm waiting in hope, a few minutes before they are delivered from their guilt, and then in a moment break forth in praise and thanksgiving. These frequently discover a peculiarily tender sympathy with those who remain in distress, an ardent love and gratitude to those who prayed with them, and, almost universally, a deep concern for their unconverted relations.

When we are in a small house, only one prays at a time with those who are in distress, but when in a large house or chapel, and several persons are crying for mercy, they form a little circle of serious persons around every one who is in bondage, and, one after another, pray till the soul is set at liberty. Sometimes we have ten or more of these little companies in a chapel, at a time. To a looker on, it must appear very confused; but to those who are engaged with the distressed, it seems like being in a little room, agonizing for one soul that is just ready to perish, and often have I found it a little heaven to my own soul. Glory be to God for ever, Amen! I am, dear Sir, your's affectionately.

JAMES WOOD.

P. S. I should have observed that this work has been chiefly carried on in prayer-meetings, though preaching is owned in a manner it was not before. We seldom preach in any country place or in town, but we spend an hour or two in singing and prayer afterwards; and if there be any in distress, we generally continue with them till they are delivered.

Mr. Atmore to the Rev. Dr. Coke.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—The great work of God in Halifax circuit and its neighborhood, is almost indescribable; I scarcely know how to relate the circumstances thereof. It began at Greetland, which for many years had been proverbially dead, so that the preachers had often serious thoughts of entirely giving it up. It was in a love-feast that an uncommon measure of the spirit of prayer was given to my dear fellow-labourer, Brother Lomas, and also to many of the people. The power of God descended in an extraordinary manner; and the Spirit of life from the Holy One visited many mournful hearts with peace and love, and enabled them to return home rejoicing in the God of their salvation. When these persons returned to their respective societies, and related the great things which the Lord had done for their souls, many believed their tes-

timony, and were excited to seek, with greater diligence than ever, the same mercies; and in a little time, the work spread into several other parts of the country.

We have added about seven hundred persons in our circuit since last Conference; the far greater part of whom, there is reason to believe, are truly converted to the Lord, and can rejoice in him as their Saviour and Redeemer. The work has commonly been carried on in prayer-meetings; which were singularly owned of God. Frequently, ten, fifteen, or twenty souls, were either justified or fully sanctified at one of these meetings. Very often, while one of the brethren was earnestly engaged in prayer, the power of God descended, and some began to be deeply affected, and cried aloud for mercy. Many were much agitated in their bodies, and even fainted away. The cries of others were very great indeed, and they remained in distress for several hours, till they were sensibly delivered from their misery, and enabled to rejoice in God. It has been no uncommon thing for six, eight, or ten persons to be in distress together, in the same room. In these cases our friends continued in prayer with them, till they were brought into the liberty of the children of God. I have conversed with some hundreds of them, and have been surprised to hear the clear and distinct account which they gave of the work upon their souls. Some have now evidenced the reality of the change upon their hearts, for twelve months, by a holy life; so that the mouths of gainsayers are stopped. I hope this work will spread over the whole earth!

I am your affectionate friend and brother.

CHARLES ATMORE.

June 20, 1794.

A letter from Mr. W. E. Miller, of Sheffield, to the Society of Methodists at Manchester.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,—Being requested by several worthy members of your Society to address you on a most important and delicate subject, I should have found the most extreme reluctance in complying with their desire, were I not assured that you would receive the attempt as a proof of my heart-felt desire for your present religious progress, and for your future eternal happiness. I shall never cease to pray for the Manchester Society; never shall I forget that remarkable night when God displayed his saving power; when he wrought signs and wonders, wounded, healed, and filled; intermingled our souls in love, and poured down a shower of heavenly fire.

The present revival, in its power and extent, is but little known; many who truly feel its effects are unconscious of its glorious latitude. It is a revival of the *simple power* of primitive Christianity; its energetic is—"Are you converted *now*?—Have you the direct Spirit's witness

now? — Are you sanctified *now?* — Are you filled with love, growing in grace, pressing onwards, and *now* ready for heaven?" — It pierces through all the artful disguises of mere formality; It exposes all the subtle excuses of declining faithfulness. It looks through the pompous blaze of pulpit oratory, and cries out, "I must see and feel *effects*. I must see souls awakened, converted, sanctified; I must feel quickened, revived, blessed." — It is not satisfied with having the *head* instructed, it requires the *heart* to be touched, the power of the Spirit to descend, the kingdom of heaven brought nigh, and God dwelling within! Light conversation, evil-speaking, party disputes, fly before it. Its language is *prayer*, its action is *faith*, and its effects are *union* and *love*.

The Almighty has sent the offer of the present revival as a cure for every evil. When the soul is truly alive to God, every external disorder will be rectified. When every member of the church is *sound*, the church must flourish in vigorous health. Remember, therefore, my dear brethren, that this revival must first exist in the heart; its essence consists of deep humility, inward holiness, external righteousness, active faith, fervent zeal, and triumphant love! A man who does not posess these essentials, is little qualified to taste the sweetness, to drink into the spirit or fathom the depth of this revival,

I will presume to recommend a few Regulations, which seem necessary to be observed in Manchester, to preserve the spirit and the purity of the revival.—May you bear with my frankness, and pardon my inability!

First.—Never suffer two persons to pray aloud over one person in distress. While one prays, another may softly exhort the distressed to believe the promises suited to his case, and the surrounding persons may join their hearty and heart-felt Amens to the prayer.

Secondly.—Whenever a person receives justification or sanctification, let ALL the congregation join in singing

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow," &c

to a short tune; except the persons who are actually praying with the distressed. By this regulation, order will be preserved; the congregation will have a standard of union; and those who are agonizing with God for his power, but who have not public gifts, will be able to join; and perceiving the effects of their faith, will receive blessings into their own souls, and be kept praying, believing, and rejoicing.

Thirdly.—Upon any remarkable out-pouring of the Spirit, numbers of the world may rush in, and begin to censure and condemn. Nay, they will deride its manner and ridicule its effects; if they did not, it would not be of God.—Never,—no, never answer their objections, or reply to their calumnies; go on, exhorting, praying, and praising. Let them see by your engagedness of action, the importance of the work; let them perceive your attention so swallowed up by the momentous objects be-

ore you, that you have no time to listen to the cavils of infidelity, the mockery of ignorance, or to the artful sneers of formality. This conduct will disappoint Satan, preserve peace, and have a wonderful effect on the by-standers.

Fourthly.—When a person appears to be in distress, let him be closely examined respecting his past experience and present conviction. Then clearly make known to him his true state. Much penetration is sometimes requisite; but the Spirit of Truth will teach the truly simple and zealous. When the seeker professes to have obtained the blessing, be very cautious, obtain a clear and satisfactory evidence that the work is performed. Never sing praise in a doubtful case.

Fifthly.—Entire scriptural submission to every preacher, whose heart is in the work, must be rigorously observed; and where the preacher unfortunately opposes, the utmost gentleness, mildness, and humility, will be shewn by every real friend to the revival, and by every member who feels its real influence. This conduct will evince the spirit which actuates the active, and will by degrees conquer the most determined opposition. Is there a preacher in the connection that could oppose Divine power, truth, and love?

Finally, my dear brethren, ever remember that this revival is a revival of primitive love, and can only be preserved in the soul by much private prayer, deep humility, and strong faith. The most ardent zeal, the most determined activity, will fail, without these superior requisites.—Nothing less can preserve the true, sterling, pure SPIRIT OF POWER.

Lie at each others' feet, act for God, feel for souls, expect present blessings, die daily, live in a state of holiness, put on the whole armour of God, fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.—May the everlasting God revive the work of his own Spirit in the Society of Manchester! May the formal become lively, and the zealous be filled with love! May the Lord engrave the revival on every heart, and then use you as instruments to spread it all around you!—Amen, and Amen!

So prays your affectionate brother in Jesus,

W. E. MILLER.

THE REVIVAL.

(A HYMN BY MR. W. E. MILLER.)

HASTE again, ye days of grace!
When assembled in one place,
Signs and wonders mark'd the hour!
All were fill'd and spoke with pow'er:—
Hands uplifted, eyes o'erflow'd,
Hearts enlarged, self destroy'd!
All things common now we'll prove,
All our common stock be love.

CHORUS.

JESUS now his work revives,
Now his quick'ning Spirit strives;
Oh! let preachers, people,—ALL,
Listen to the GLORIOUS CALL!
Join the simple lively throng,
Catch the fire and swell the SONG;
Heart in heart, and hand in hand,
Spread the LIFE through ALL THE LAND.

Oh! that each may now prevail,
Act the faith that cannot fail!
Rise and draw the blessings down!
Seize the kingdom for our own!
Fire our hearts with holy zeal,
Glowing still for Zion's weal:
Heav'n open! blessings pour!
Spirit, work the PRESENT HOUR!
Jesus now, &c.

Lo! the knife we boldly take,
Bind our Isaacs to thy stake;
Freely part with all for thee,
Welcome KING OF LIBERTY!
Now we die to self and sin,
Nothing feel but love within;
May this faith in works abound,
Shine and burn to all around!

CHORUS.

PILGRIMS! soon the journey's done!
WARRIORS! soon the battle's won!

Where, your doubts, your cares and fears?
See! the glitt'ring crown appears!
Hark! the angels shouting cry,
"Welcome! welcome to the sky!"
JESUS calls, and calls for thee,
"FAITHFUL SERVANT, COME TO ME!"

SATAN fill'd with HELLISH SPITE,
Veil'd in robes of borrow'd light,
Strove to scatter ruin wide,
Disunite and then DIVIDE!
Still his utmost skill shall fail!
Patient love shall still prevail!
Clust'ring closer, now we'll cling,
Swarm, and hive around our King!
Pilgrims! soon, &c.

APPENDIX.

OUTLINES OF SERMONS.

The following skeletons of sermons are not presented as models for the imitation of preachers, but to show the general substance, tenour and mode of Mr. Bramwell's discourses. Indeed, from the very imperfect state in which they were left by him, it is evident that he had not the most distant idea of their ever appearing in print; and they are now published, merely from a persuasion, that every thing, however trifling, which concerned the deceased, will by many be considered important and interesting. It may not perhaps be deemed irrelevant to speak of Mr. B.'s sentiments respecting preparations for the pulpit.

In the choice of texts, he thought the enquiry of a minister ought not to be, "Upon what subject can I display my abilities to the greatest advantage?" but, "What subjects will be most appropriate and best adapted to the spiritual wants of the people?" When they had earnestly implored Divine direction, and maturely considered the proposed subject of discourse, it would then be very proper, especially for young preachers, to commit their thoughts to paper; and he saw no impropriety in occasionally writing very copiously, as such an exercise would improve their style, and call forth their mental energies. Neither did he prohibit the use of commentaries; but he thought they should only be consulted after preachers had exerted their own abilities, and diligently investigated the meaning of the sacred text.

But though he granted this liberty, he thought it highly improper to write sermons at full length, and then to commit them to memory, and to repeat them as a school boy repeats his task. This mode of preaching if it merits the name, appeared to him highly objectionable, and likely to be productive of the most pernicious consequences both to the people and to the preachers,—because the former would be disgusted with what resembled the recitations of children, and the latter would almost unavoidably be led to depend more upon their memories, than upon Divine influence.

On consulting the sacred scriptures, Mr. Bramwell found that of old, 'holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,' and

he thought that to deviate from this, the primitive plan, would be a dangerous and an unwarrantable innovation. He recommended the ministers of the gospel, after having employed all these prudential means, to ascend the pulpit under a powerful conviction of the importance of their station and calling, and to be deeply impressed with a consideration of this humiliating truth,—that all mere human efforts are totally inadequate to the due performance of the work of the ministry. Casting, then, their burden upon the Lord, they ought to expect the Divine blessing to accompany their humble endeavours, and to crown their labours wtth abundant success.

OUTLINE I.

For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.—1 *Thessalonians*, *ii.* 3, 4.

The servants of God, in all ages, have found the greatest satisfaction in seeing their labours rendered useful to the souls of the people; and St. Paul, when writing to this church, informs them that his labours had not been in vain; "After that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God, with much contention; for our exhortation was not of deceit," &c. &c.

In treating this subject, I would, in the first place consider this trial;

I. God trieth our hearts.

II. We are allowed of God to be put in trust.

III. Our conduct in executing this trust.

IV. We must not seek to please men but God.

I. *God trieth our hearts.*

1. God trieth the *peace* of our hearts. Persons from certain considerations of station, connections, prospects in life, &c., may soothe and calm their minds, speaking peace 'When God hath not spoken peace. These persons may have no acquaintance with the religion of the heart.' Satan, the grand adversary of man, uses every means to preserve the children of men in this false security, and to prevent all proper inquiry respecting their salvation. This is an effectual bar to conviction, godly sorrow, and true repentance.

2. He trieth our *love*. It is to be feared that thousands of persons are led to substitute natural affections for Divine love. But have we not a display of natural affection, existing in a striking manner, amongst the brute creation? Yes, both in the male and female. See this exempli-

fied in the cow, the sheep, the dog, &c. &c., and yet we cannot imagine, than any of these inferior creatures experience in any measure 'the love of God.' By submitting to his natural feelings, a man may be led astray, in any situation in life, yea, in every part of his practice in an official capacity. In being influenced by natural affection, *governors* may act contrary to all proper order, to every law of God or man, and be led in every case to act contrary to all propriety. And in the case of *masters* with their servants, when they are in a good humour they may bestow particular favours upon them, and perhaps in such a manner as to lessen their proper authority and due subordination; and, when actuated by different feelings, they may become very tyrannical in their proceedings, to the great injury both of themselves and their servants. Their natural feelings may cause *parents* to neglect their duty towards their children, and to treat them in a manner which is directly opposed to the oracles of God. The feelings of parents become their law; the children are exceedingly indulged; every thing they want is given to them, however injurious to the body, mind, or station in life; correction or advice is no longer attended to. To all persons who endeavour to remedy this folly, such parents will say, "We must love them; and if we love them how can we do any thing to grieve them?" But God tries our love, whether it is from him, and agreeably to his law.—*Ministers* of the gospel ought to be upon their guard in this particular, especially respecting our discipline amongst the people. We may make our feelings our law, and proceed with the utmost partiality, in a number of cases. But it was St. Paul's special charge to Timothy, "before God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels," to observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by PARTIALITY.

3. God tries our *faith*.—There is a faith which cannot be of the operation of God. Many of our modern believers must be tried. They believe God to be a glorious being, that his cause is eternal, that he is wise and good, of great loving kindness to all men, that he is too good to punish any of his creatures, and that he has made no place or provision for torment. These are persons that profess to be of the most liberal sentiments, and if those who have to maintain the truth of the gospel should proclaim, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,' instantly their reply is, 'you are illiberal.' Suppose we happen to say, 'He that believeth not shall be damned!' They exclaim "Oh you are quite illiberal! We think much better of God than that!" If we tell them, that the punishment of sins will be eternal, and that there will be no end of their misery, they again cry out, "Illiberal!' and say, "We cannot indulge such hard thoughts concerning God." These persons, in their admiration of the *mercy* of God, forget his *holiness* and his *justice*. They, in effect, divide the Divine attributes, and take away from the everlasting Jehovah, what so essentially belongs to him. They will believe all that is agree-

able to the carnal mind, but criminally neglect and despise the grand doctrines of the Bible, which is the word of God. It is evident that Satan, the great deceiver of men, has lately entered into the world in a new dress: he has substituted the word "*liberality*" for *deism*; and though it is more palatable, it is exceedingly dangerous even to the Church of God. This has been a deep plan; for in the present day it has had general and most baneful effects. To my certain knowledge, a number who formerly were truly religious, have been caught in this fatal snare, —I fear to their own destruction.

True faith, which is of the operation of God, believes all the attributes of God, all the contents of the book of God; both the promises and threatenings, the rewards and punishments. As ministers of this word, are we not in danger from the fine-sounding word *liberality*, and from those fine liberal people? Let us be careful, my brethren, never to shun to '*declare the whole counsel of God*;' For God tries our faith.

4. God tries our *joy*. I need not expatiate much on this particular; for it will be very easy to discover, that there is much joy which is not from God. The mind may be affected with gladness from different causes, circumstances, and practices in the world. Some rejoice in their own superior strength; and others in having rich relations. Some rejoice in receiving great possessions; others, on account of certain deliverances. Some are joyful because they have obtained victories over their enemies; and others delight themselves in worldly pleasures. We may rejoice in a thousand things, and yet our joy may be merely natural; it may not be of God, but carnal and ministering to destruction. St. Paul said, 'Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.' This kind of joy is 'in hope of glory;' it is 'unspeakable and full of glory.' It is 'with trembling;' it is constant and for evermore.

5. God tries our *hope*.—There are few persons in England who believe in a future state of rewards, but who hope to be saved. Yet it is possible that we may be greatly deceived in our expectations. Some hope to be saved, because they are not so wicked as many of those around them; others, because they have many sufferings in this world. Some, because God is merciful; and others, because their eyes are opened. And some persons indulge in hope, because they once knew the way and walked in it. Thus do some hope on one false ground, and some on another; but there can be no hope, except that which arises from our standing in the grace of God, or 'Christ in you, the hope of glory.' God tries our hope, whether it be built on a good or a false foundation. He tries us by the gospel. We live under this glorious dispensation, and we must be acquitted or condemned according to the law of our dispensation.

II. *We are allowed of God to be put in trust.*

If we be found to be proper subjects, the Almighty may allow us to be entrusted with the gospel. "ALLOWED" is a strong word. The everlasting Jehovah condescends to commit a deposit to us: We are put in trust with the gospel, — with all its warnings, invitations, promises, privileges, — even with a kingdom, and with God himself in his Divine attributes. Be astonished, Oh heavens! wonder, Oh earth; Shall the glorious, the ever-blessed God thus deign to intrust his creatures with his glory, for the salvation of men? for that which is of more value than the world, yea than all the material creation of God? The servant of Christ may say, "The world is in darkness, but I bring light. The world is expiring, but I bring life. The world is impure, but I bring the cleansing blood. The world is in misery, but I bring happiness and everlasting glory." This is the will of Christ, yea his last will and testament, — '*that they may behold my glory.*' He hath chosen us as his executors. We are allowed of God to see his last will and testament executed; and we have to impart to every man his proper portion, to see that every person really inherits his share of the estate, of the purchased and bequeathed possion, — justification and sanctification, yea the fulness of God. And we are not to keep back any thing that may be profitable to you. Every minister is called to declare the whole counsel of God. A man who undertakes the charge of a vessel at sea, is suposed to understand navigation. A man who has the charge of a business, should understand the whole of that business. In writing to the Church at Corinth, the Apostle informs them, that he and his follow-labourers were 'workers together with God, — and ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.' If a man is called to improve a farm, he should undersand ploughing, sowing, weeding, &c.; and, if to build a house, he must know how to lay the foundation, and to raise the superstructure. So if we are called of God to preach the gospel, we are called not only to preach a *part*, but the whole of that gospel, to declare the law and all its penalties, to declare the promises with all their accompanying privileges the rewards and the everlasting punishments. For on what doctrine was our blessed Lord more express, than on the doctrine of eternal damnation? If the promises are true, threatenings are also true. But when the labours of some preachers are not attended with effects, they tranquillize their own minds and satisfy the people, by declaring, that their call is the building up of the Church; and in this way they excuse themselves from engaging with proper zeal and labour in the work of the ministry; and seek to accommodate themselves to "the liberal," — often, it is to be feared, to their own destruction, and to the great prejudice of their hearers. A talent to preach, is certainly a talent for the whole of preaching. It is true, that some may

be called 'sons of thunder,' and some, 'sons of consolation.' But can those epithets mean any thing more, than that some are more and some less vehement and energetic in their manner? If we explain it so as to make one man a mere preacher of the law and threatenings, and another a preacher of the promises, it would undoubtedly contradict a great part of the New Testament. Let us take the word of God in its fair and proper meaning; and, in the phraseology of Scripture, let us 'declare the whole counsel of God,' neither adding to it nor diminishing from it, — 'seeking not to please men, but God who trieth our hearts.'

III. *Our manner of delivering the counsel of God.*

1. '*Our exhortation was not of deceit.*' — We have not by any means deceived you. We have not led you into error, either in your views or in your feelings, in your conversation or your practice. We have not acted in any way to cut off your expectation. We have preached in such a way, as to encourage you to expect a knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, full salvation from evil, and a joyful resurrection to eternal life. As executors, we have not done any thing to defraud or cheat you out of your everlasting inheritance; but we have used every means, that you might obtain full possession of all the valuable property devised to you. We have no desire to rob Christians of their spiritual riches, their divine pleasures, and their eternal kingdom of glory.

2. '*Not of uncleanness.*' — We received this gospel from the pure love of God, and this love constrains us. We were amongst you, in consistency of character: If we preached against drunkenness, we were ourselves temperate in all things; if against swearing, we gave ourselves rather to prayer; if against worldly pleasures, we refrained from them; if we told the people that they should not be light and trifling in their conversation, we were deeply serious; and if we said, "You must cease from evil," we gave up all sin. You know how holily, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves amongst you. We shewed ourselves in all things to be men of God, having only one end in view, — the eternal salvation of your souls.

3. '*Not of guile.*' — It appears from the Apostle's letters to the Corinthians, that he was charged with guile. But on carefully reading that part of his letter, it is evident that he repelled the charge, and it might have been truly said of him, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!' Oh how often have I been pained on hearing professsors of religion endeavour to vindicate the practice of sinful cunning, saying, "I caught them by guile!" Can there be a greater evil? Can there be any thing more displeasing to God? We should possess purity of intention, heart, or affection, and purity of design and practice; honesty, without the least cunning, which is unbecoming in all the disciples of Christ.

But the ministers of the gospel, especially, should ever feel that love which is without dissimulation and without guile. The heart and the word should always be in unison, producing the greatest consistency and piety of conduct. — We are called to be followers of Him, in whose mouth guile was never found.

IV. '*Not seeking to please men but God.*'

It is highly proper that every man should endeavour to 'please his neighbour for his good to edification.' But we should never seek to obtain their praises, money, &c. We are certainly in great danger at the present time, and especially when we want their money. The prophet Samuel endeavoured to avoid this evil of men-pleasing. He said, 'Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or of whose hand have I recived any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith?' The people were satisfied, and acknowledged that he had acted uprightly and faithfully and had declared to them the will of God, without either regarding the smiles or the frowns of men. — There are various ways of seeking to please men.

1. By neglecting to declare the threatenings of the Lord against sinners, and by not mentioning the place of final punishment.

2. By softening down the strong and nervous denunciations of Scripture. Instead of "Hell" and "eternal damnation," these modern and refined preachers would perhaps say, "A place, or a state, too bad to mention!"

3. By not insisting upon the direct witness of the Spirit, the clear and indubitable evidence of our pardon and acceptance with God.

4. By ceasing to preach a full salvation, the necessity of being cleansed from all sinful tempers, and entirely sanctified to God.

5. By intimating, that it is not necessary to be so strict, that we may indulge in worldly pleaseres, trifling amusements, as cards, plays, &c.' and yet be good Christians.

6. By not insisting strongly upon the strict observance of the Sabbath, many will be induced to plead the necessity of going to counting-houses, &c.' on the Lord's day. It is to be feared that some preachers are not sufficiently decided in their discourses. Rather than insist upon an entire abstraction from the world, they will allow that you may have something of the spirit of the world, and yet be saved.

We seek '*not to please men but God,*' that is, we study strive, labour, work, preach, &c. &c. to please God. We fix our eyes on death, judgment, and eternity. We look at God the Judge of quick and dead; — and we labour that we may be at last approved by him, that we may stand at his right hand, and hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant! enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" AMEN!

OUTLINE II.

Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. — *Matthew, v.* 13.

I. *Ye are the salt of the earth*, &c. — Ministers are the salt of of the earth.

1. Salt savours, preserves, &c.—Ministers under God season and preserve the world from damnation.

They are SALT:

(1.) In their spirit, love, zeal, patience, compassion, &c. &c.

(2.) In their life and conversation:—their speech is always with grace, seasoned with salt; with which their conduct also is seasoned.—These graces are seen in all.

(3.) Their ministry is savoury: they teach in love, zeal, patience, compassion, &c. They reprove, invite, encourage, promise, break down, bind up, &c.

The world is thus seasoned and preserved.

2. Salt may lose its saviour: so both ministers and people may lose the life and power of religion, and then no savour will remain in their spirit, conversation, conduct, ministry, &c.

Rock salt, if for a time exposed to the atmosphere, loses its savour: so, ministers, if separated from union with Christ Jesus, lose their savour. Ministers may be called to the work, and afterwards lose their savour: so Christian may be as salt for a season, but may lose their savour.

Rock salt may have some appearance of good salt, and yet have lost its savour: and the Church may have the appearance of good, and yet have lost its savour. 'Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.' Ministers may lose their savour, and yet continue to preach for many years.

II. *If the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?* Or what shall we find as a substitute for the seasoning?

1. Will pleading our origin as a sect, our mode or our form of religion, how excellent soever it may be?

When John the Baptist began his ministry, the Jews, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, pleaded their having Abraham to their Father, to whom John observed, 'Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.' He calls them "a generation of vipers:" 'O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?' Is it not exceedingly common now for people of different persuasions to plead

the same reason for their alliance to the Father of the faithful? but may not our forefathers have had the savour, and we under the same form have lost it?

Was there ever greater injury done to the Quakers than by a late publication concerning them, though, I believe, it was well intended? The author extols the government, manners, &c., of that sect; but never so much as hints at their having lost the savour of godliness. Was not this to seal them in their ruined condition? Have they generally retained the spirit or savour of a Fox, a Barclay, a Penn, and other worthies? Whilst they profess to receive the baptism of the Spirit, may it not be said, 'Who hath warned you? bring forth fruits meet for repentance.'

Here I may observe respecting other sectaries: Was there ever yet any sect of Christians that retained its savour for many years? Has not the Almighty, in his infinite wisdom, been one age after another changing his people into different names? When the love of one formerly zealous and lively sect has become cold, has he not generally raised up another people, called them by his name, and set his strong mark of approval upon them? And has not this been done to perpetuate the genuine savour?

In the letters sent to the different churches, whatever deserved approbation, in the spirit and conduct of the members, was mentioned with Christian simplicity and gladness: But, at the same time, every thing worthy of reproof and condemnation, was likewise mentioned; and this, painful as it must have been, was done to preserve, if possible the savour of religion. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

In a certain large town, a learned minister amongst the Methodists, was heard to praise and extol the whole society; when at the very time it was a fact, ascertained from the clearest investigation, that nearly the whole of that society had lost their savour,—their "first love." This public declaration was a great preventive of even the least usefulness among that people on the part of the ministers who succeeded him: for the people appeared to be in a state of security and sealed in their destruction.

I have always set my face against what is called by some "croaking" or "prophesying of evil," and have been confident that to scold and beat a dead church is not the way to quicken it. Yet may we not go to the other extreme, and cry even to our own destruction,—"The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are we!" It is certain, that amongst the Methodist the salt has very generally lost its savour; and

to plead our ancestors, our excellent church-government, and our rules or forms of worship, will not be a substitute for the life and power of religion: The application of such a remedy can never recover us from a state of supineness or deep lethargy.

2. Will the wisdom and eloquence of the pulpit prevent the loss of the savour?

St. Paul says, 'I came not to you with excellency of speech or of wisdom. My speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Pulpit eloquence may produce a faith or dependence on "the wisdom of men;" but it can never be a substitute for, or restore, "the power of God." I have made very frequent observations on this subject; and, among all those who are so much carried away with the glare of pulpit eloquence, I have not found one who made any progress in religion. Such persons universally rested in what excited the praise of men. Pulpit eloquence, without the power of God, has a natural tendency to destroy the saviour of godliness. I have too often known it spread death through the whole of a society.

III. Of what use is salt after having lost its savour? '*It is good for nothing, but to be trodden under foot,*' &c.

Of what use are ministers who have lost their savour? Whatever they once were, they are now good for nothing. Their spirit, conversation, and conduct, are not good. However strict and however eloquent they may be, their preaching is good for nothing. They will neither season nor preserve from ruin; in short, they will not profit the people. Ministers, at a certain period, may have been really called of God; but in consequence of having lost their savour, they are not now called. It is to be feared, that this is the case with numbers, even among the Methodists, who remain in the circuits merely for a '*piece of bread.*'

Our Lord in another place observes, that such unsavory salt is neither fit for the field nor for the dung-hill. Salt with savour may be good for the land; it may do good to mix with other manure; but when it has lost its savour, it is fit for nothing.

Such ministers as have lost the spirit of the gospel, are fit for nothing,—neither for the church nor for the world. Single-handed they will do no good; and, to mix with other ministers, they are good for nothing, but to be 'cast out and trodden under foot of men.' Yet we have no rule, no law in Methodism, to exclude or remove those who have lost the savour.—This makes me weep in secret; and I can only say, "Lord, save us; we perish!"

OUTLINE III.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to preserve you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,—To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever! Amen!—*Jude*, 24, 25.

1. *Before the presence of his glory.*

1. The children of God are to be introduced into the presence of the glorious God. Persons of rank and quality are introduced with great pomp into the higher circles in this world, and account it a great honor; but how much more honorable to be admitted into the presence of the eternal Jehovah!

2. They will be also introduced to all the holy angels, the glorious ones,

3. To the glorious humanity of Christ; 'Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.'

4. To glorified saints, pious relations, &c., who have died before us, and who wait to receive us into heavenly habitations.

II. *With exceeding joy.*—This is indeed beyond all earthly joy. The joy which we may experience whilst in the Church militant, is very great. To enjoy the favour of God, to be adopted into his family, and to be introduced among his saints here, are high and distinguished privileges. We may through grace be changed from glory to glory even in the present world; and, without doubt, all who receive this great salvation, all who are thus entirely sanctified, and who press into the fulness of God, will feel a most extraordinary joy; but however exquisite the feelings of pleasure [may be which we enjoy here, they are only like a drop to the ocean, when they are compared with those of which we shall partake in eternity an "exceeding joy,"—a joy ever great and glorious in itself, and a joy exceeding every other, which can be received or felt in this imperfect state.

III. *God is able to keep you from falling.*

Mention a few reasons why Christians fall:

1. Some fall through self-confidence, as Peter, &c.

2. Some, by not persevering in the duty of private prayer, with the same importunity as formerly.

3. Some, by taking up what they had from conviction laid down.

4. Some, by continuing their acts of faith for the promised blessings. Because they do not immediately receive, they become faint in their minds, and cast away their confidence, which, if cherished and retained, 'hath great recompence of reward.' But God is both able and wil-

ling to make you stand; he can keep you from loosing the grace already received; he can preserve you in every battle, in every temptation and trial, in all the various circumstances of life, in prosperity or adversity, in honour or dishonour, in life or death. Yes, 'He is able to save to the uttermost even the feeblest of his followers.'

IV. Therefore to him be most devoutly ascribed by the church militant and triumphant glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever!—He is infinitely worthy; for his ability to present his followers *faultless*, is only equalled by the *wisdom* which devised the stupendous means for accomplishing their salvation. In this view, he is indeed '*the only wise God*, which is himself *our Saviour*,' who alone is worthy to receive ceaseless and eternal adorations, from the intelligent creatures whom he has redeemed and saved.

OUTLINE IV.

So I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest.—*Hebrews, iii.* 11.

1. REST.—May need rest:

Numbers are uneasy because of sin, as the children of Israel, while in Egypt, were uneasy under their burdens. Yet God said concerning his ancient people, 'I have seen their afflections and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them.' He delivered them and he will deliver you: 'for in all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and his pity he redeemed them.' There is therefore a rest from sorrow and from sin, and this can only be found in the favour of God, and in reconciliation through Christ.

Numbers are uneasy because of inward evil.—The people of God are much grieved when they feel pride, anger, impatience, &c. There is a great rest from all these in the image of God, in perfct love, and the renewal of their nature in righteousness and true holiness.

The people of God are often greatly troubled because of bodily pain, family trials, and occurrences that befal them in this world. But there is a complete rest from all these in the glory that shall be revealed. 'There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.'

A promise of this rest has been given, which is purchased by Christ, recorded by prophets and evangelists, offered in the gospel, and enjoyed by every true Christian in every age.

II. 'GOD'S OATH.—*He sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest.*'

Sinners of every discription have entered into his rest. To whom, then, sware he that they should not enter into rest, but to them who believed not?

Observe a land, a pleasant land, a land of rest, delight, and of great joy; this land is walled all round, except where the gates of entrance are placed. Upon these gates this inscription is conspicuously displayed in large capital letters, "A PROMISE OF REST WITHIN." Great numbers crowd about the walls, appearing exceedingly uneasy, and as they can gain an occasional glimpse through the gates, and can have a transient view of the purchased possession, they observe all those who reside within the gates to be fully happy and at rest. Such a sight powerfully excites their desires to be admitted into the heavenly country; and while they are content to accomplish as hirelings their appointed day, they have a wish to depart and to be with Christ, — which is far better.

Over the gates is inscibed this promise, — 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST!' All who fully believe this declaration, are entitled to an entrance through Christ; and when they are within the walls of his Church, as long as they continue faithful, they are in a place of perfect safety.

But several people read the promises, and yet indulge in doubts either on account of the greatness of their sins, their unfaithful propensities, or their natural weakness and inability to stand. And numbers expect to obtain an entrance into the heavenly kingdom, merely because God is merciful.

Some who have obeyed the instructions of God's word, come to these gates, and bring a key with them, which is the merit of Christ, the power and truth of God. They approach, the key is not a false one, it fits the lock exactly; they give it a turn, the gate flies open, and an entrance is administered to them abundantly into the rest of the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But God hath sworn that none shall enter except those who bring this key.

III. Let us therefore fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest any one of us should really come short of it. — Let us tremble and dread the bare idea of being shut out and excluded, because our state will then be that of 'outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.' If any of us come short of this rest at last, or halt before we reach it, we shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God.' Like racers therefore let us strive to attain the goal; let us not content ourselves with remaining *without* the walls of Christ's spiritual kingdom, but *strive* to enter within them. How awful will it be to be seen by heaven, hell, and the world, to come short of pardon, holiness, and heaven!

OUTLINE V.

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. — 1 *Thessalonians*, *i.* 2, 3

1. *Your work of faith.*

1. Faith has its *receiving* work. — Man's redemption is a glorious undertaking. For he was 'not redeemed with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' He by his death procured all things. All things are committed to him for our salvation. But God hath determined that this salvation shall be given only to those who believe.

Faith knows this, and submitting to the ordination of heaven, receives all things from God, — forgiveness, holiness, full salvation. 'For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.'

2. Its uniting work. — It unites the soul to God in all his attributes and to God's people. 'We are come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.' This work of faith draws the soul to all the ordinances.

3. It hath its *suffering* work. — Read the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. Faith hath its perspective. *It is the evidence of things not seen.* It sees beyond the sun and stars, and reaches unto the things declared in the Bible. It looks into glory and behold things that are invisible to mortal eye,—the happiness of the blessed, the misery of the damned, &c.

II. *Labour of love.* — Divine love employs many servants, — the body, soul and spirit. They labour (1.) unwearicdly, '*remembering without ceasing*;' — (2.) disinterestedly, *seeking not its own*; — (3.) and courageously not being afraid of dangers. Love labours for the benefit both of body and soul. It labours to supply the wants of the bodies of men, and to warn, instruct, and to save their souls.

III. *Patience of hope.* — Hope or expectation is a most necessary thing in this business. To hope in God for a continuance of temporal supplies, that he will still open the hearts of men for this blessed undertaking, that it may be continued with all success, — to hope in God for a blessing on the souls of the afflicted that he will send them salvation, — and to hope in God for a full reward of everlasting glory; — all these acts of hope will assist our patience, and in this consists the patience of hope, awaiting with resignation whatever trial or cross may befal us,

that may prove the means under God of accomplishing the end which he desires.

IV. *In our Lord Jesus Christ and in the sight of God the Father.*

(1.) *In Christ the way*, being the direct way to the Father.

(2.) *The truth*, being the truth of all the prophecies and promises.

(3.) *The life*, producing this life in us, and exciting us to all these exertions.

In the sight of God the Father.—Jehovah looks down upon all your work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope. He looks with approbation and with pleasure. The Apostle says, 'God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love which you have showed to his name.' The Lord looks with pleasure; he says, 'They shall be mine in the day when I make up my jewels.'

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